

*The Carman-Dufferin*  
**STANDARD**  
**Merry Christmas**  
LOCALLY OWNED HISTORY BOOK FOR THE COMMUNITY

VOLUME 5  
EDITION 51

THURSDAY,  
DECEMBER 25, 2025



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STANDARD PHOTO BY JOLENE CALLUM

Rosie Callum peers through the arena glass at Santa during Skate with Santa Hockey Day on Dec. 13 at the Lloyd Orchard Community Arena in Miami. The festive fundraiser included a pancake breakfast and an on-ice skate with Santa, drawing about 75 people in support of Miami Hockey and the community arena.

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**Merry Christmas**

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FROM THE WALINGA FAMILY TO YOURS.



# Students spread holiday cheer at Miami concert



**STANDARD PHOTOS BY PAIGE BAXTER AND JOLENE CALLUM**  
Miami School students from kindergarten to Grade 8 performed during the school's Christmas concert on Thursday, Dec. 11. The evening featured poems, instrumental music and group singing, with a special visit from Santa Claus to close out the celebration.



**Wishing you  
joy &  
happiness  
throughout  
the holidays  
and all year  
long!**

**Merry Christmas &  
Happy New Year!**

From the Councils and Staff of the Town  
of Carman & RM of Dufferin



carmandufferin.com

# Smile Cookies support



**STANDARD PHOTO BY DENNIS YOUNG**  
Tim Hortons owner Jeff Doerksen (right) and staff present a \$7,782 donation to the Carman & District Christmas Cheer Board from Tim Hortons' 2025 Holiday Smile Cookie campaign, which ran Nov. 17–23. Deana Gauld (left) and Tracy Bernard (middle) accepted the cheque on behalf of the Cheer Board, with local volunteers helping decorate cookies throughout the week-long fundraiser. The donation was shared with the Tim Hortons Foundation's Camps.





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Happy New Year*

*The Carman-Dufferin*  
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Lana Meier



**SALES & MARKETING**  
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**SALES & MARKETING**  
Gwen Keller



**REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Dennis Young



**REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Emily Antonio



**REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Jennifer McFee



**REPORTER**  
Annaliese Meier



**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Tara Gionet



**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Nicole Kapusta



**CLASSIFIED ADMINISTRATOR**  
Corrie Sargent



**DISTRIBUTION**  
Christy Brown

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# get heard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

## Portage-Lisgar MP holds open house

By Lorne Stelmach

Portage-Lisgar MP Branden Leslie welcomed the holiday season break from government duties, but he didn't step away without using the opportunity to meet with constituents in his riding.

Leslie held his annual Christmas open houses Dec. 13 at his Winkler constituency office and then Dec. 14 at his office in Portage la Prairie.

The overriding theme of his message and what he has been hearing from his Conservative supporters is there have been a lot of promises made by the Liberal government but very few of them have been delivered on so far.

"We have tried our level best to hold the government's feet to the fire on what the priorities are," he said. "Frankly, the government achieved extremely little this parliament ... their own legislative agenda was extremely light.

"The government didn't put forward a lot of ideas and a lot of policies. Particularly coming out of an election, when we were going to build faster and better than ever before," Leslie said. "We are not seeing the results of that, and we've been holding the government to account for their failures, for delivering a whole lot of promises to Canadians ... nothing has changed."

Leslie said the open houses offered a great opportunity for him to connect with constituents one-on-one and hear their questions and concerns.

"It's a good way just to connect with people ... hear what's on folk's minds."

He noted he was particularly hearing a lot about Bill C-9, which is aimed to amend the Criminal Code and address hate propaganda, hate crime and access to religious or cultural places.

The legislation amends the Criminal Code to, among other things, repeal the requirement that the Attorney General consent to the institution of proceedings for hate propaganda of-



STANDARD PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH

Portage-Lisgar MP Branden Leslie chats with a constituent at the Christmas open house he held in Winkler last weekend.

fences, create an offence of wilfully promoting hatred against any identifiable group by displaying certain symbols in a public place, create a hate crime offence of committing an offence under that Act or any other Act of Parliament that is motivated by hatred based on certain factors, create an offence of intimidating a person in order to impede them from accessing certain places that are primarily used for religious worship or by an identifiable group for certain purposes; and create an offence of intentionally obstructing or interfering with a person's lawful access to such places.

Leslie said they see this as a highly unnecessary change to the Code and something that could potentially be an "attack on freedom of religious expression that's been hotly debated in Parliament."

He sees another overriding issue that is of the most concern to most everyone now:

"The biggest issue is the cost of living," Leslie said, citing how families are "seeing the costs increasing at gro-

cery stores ... how high prices are of pretty much everything, how wages are continuing to stagnate.

"People are making the best of it, and a region like ours, they're still incredibly generous," he added.

Leslie also briefly commented on being in Opposition as well as having recently had a couple Conservative MPs leave to sit with the Liberal government.

"Obviously, some extenuating circumstances with a couple of individuals who felt the need to cross the floor to the Liberals," he said. "I can tell you I am not going to be one of those individuals. I would be surprised if there are any more. In my view, our team is very united.

"I certainly would rather be in government," he noted. "I am confident that Canadians are going to see past the results of the government that we have had in place for the past nine months here. We continue to focus on issues that people care about."

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# Province releases first spring run-off outlook

By Ashleigh Viverois

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure's Hydrologic Forecast Centre has released the 2025 Manitoba Basins Fall Conditions Report, which provides an assessment of hydrologic conditions at the time of freeze-up for forecasting spring run-off.

The report summarizes soil moisture conditions, river flows and lake level conditions, as well as an overview of long-range weather predictions heading into winter and spring.

Most Manitoba basins received below to well-below normal precipitation from May to October, while parts of southern Manitoba and the U.S. portions of the Red River basin and Souris River basin received normal to above-normal amounts.

Soil moisture at freeze-up was near normal to above normal for parts of southern Manitoba and the U.S. portions of the Red River and Souris River basins. Record-low spring and summer precipitation in parts of the Interlake region, eastern Manitoba

and northern Manitoba has contributed to drought-like conditions in these areas.

The report also includes a long-term precipitation outlook and projected river flows and lake levels across Manitoba basins:

- Global weather prediction centres indicate a weak La Niña climate conditions are expected to continue to early winter, with a transition toward neutral conditions from January to March.

- For Manitoba, La Niña weather patterns typically result in below-normal temperatures and above-normal precipitation from December through March.

- Most southern Manitoba rivers are near normal for this time of year, while most northern rivers remain below normal.

- Flows on the Red River and Assiniboine River are near normal for this time of year. Flows are below normal on the Saskatchewan River, and well-below normal on the Winnipeg and

Churchill rivers.

- Most Manitoba lakes are at normal to below-normal levels and remain within their respective operating ranges.

- Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba are well-below normal and Lake Winnipegosis is below normal for this time of year.

The near-normal to below-normal soil moisture conditions and near-normal to below-normal river levels indicate a potential for near-normal to below-normal spring run-off in most Manitoba basins. However, the extent of spring run-off is largely dependent on precipitation throughout the winter and spring and snowmelt conditions.

A more detailed spring flood outlook is planned to be released in February 2026.

To read the 2025 Manitoba Basins Fall Conditions Report, head to [gov.mb.ca/floodinfo/pdf/2025/2025\\_fall\\_conditions\\_report.pdf](http://gov.mb.ca/floodinfo/pdf/2025/2025_fall_conditions_report.pdf).

## RCMP reaches 98 per cent deployment of body-worn cameras across Manitoba

By Lana Meier

The Manitoba RCMP says it has nearly completed its provincewide rollout of body-worn cameras, with 98 per cent of front-line officers now equipped as part of efforts to increase transparency and accountability.

In a statement, the RCMP said the cameras are already proving valuable for daily policing, evidence collection and public trust.

"The body-worn camera has provided us with many useful tools that make everyday policing a lot easier,"

said Cpl. Jenelle Hulan of the Manitoba RCMP Major Crime Unit, noting the technology simplifies taking statements, documenting scenes and tracking officer movement during investigations.

The cameras are supported by a digital evidence management system that stores and organizes footage. With 638 cameras currently in use, the Manitoba RCMP has collected 174,369 pieces of digital evidence, including video, images, audio state-

ments and documents. The service has also shared 1,510 digital case files with Manitoba Prosecutions.

Assistant Commissioner Scott McMurchy, commanding officer of the Manitoba RCMP, said the cameras have strengthened investigations and modernized police work.

"Body-worn cameras have quickly become an important tool for our officers and have helped our organization become more transparent," he said.

## The way it was this week in: December 24

By Dennis Young

**100 years ago — 1925...** Hockey Club dance nets \$25; Carman-Sperling and Roland-Myrtle hydroelectric lines energized; district school and church Christmas concerts fill the calendar; exams in full swing; two-way radio owners fined \$50 if not licensed, with licences set at \$1 per year; fire calls to be routed to phone operators using a new alarm system rather than the fire hall; veterinarian W.J. Turnbull promotes treatments using the latest scientific methods; Harry Clark's 145 hens lay 645 eggs.

**75 years ago — 1950...** RCMP deliver toys to homes of needy children; Clarence Bedford re-elected president, Cam Johnston vice-president and Hilt Drake secretary-treasurer of the Ball Club; Carman Intermediate

goalie Norm Langston outperforms Roland/Miami's Ted Storey in an 8-6 contest; cross-rib roasts priced at 59 cents per pound at Safeway; 64 entries in the Sperling Bonspiel; two Carman Collegiate rinks, skipped by Bob Woods and Ken Takvam, compete in Winnipeg at the Manitoba High School Bonspiel; new 1951 Chevrolets and Pontiacs arrive at Hardy's Garage.

**50 years ago — 1975...** Royal Bank opens a branch in Carman; RM fac-es repairs to the McEachern, Dunn and MacNair bridges; Legion elects Homewood's John Penner as president, replacing George Arthur; track club members Rick Preston, Karen Skelton, Jeff Rose, Kevin King, Lorraine Fields, Diane Wilton, Cyndie Lynn and Sherri Lee McKay travel to

the Saskatoon Games; Gulf Servico Centre's Ted Gibson, Dennis Bell and Bob Clark extend season's greetings; seniors receive 50 per cent and juniors 25 per cent of their marks as exams return after a six-year absence.

**25 years ago — 2000...** Active Living Centre site remains unresolved; coldest temperatures recorded since 1996; Mistletoe Ball hosted by Grace St. John's and Carman United churches; Bill North rinks qualify for the Select and Senior Men's events; "Butch" Harder retains his Wheat Board seat; Bar 8 Square Dance Club, with caller Charlie McCullough, entertains at the lodge; Carman Countrywide Furnishings holds a five-hour storewide stock reduction; Carman Health Auxiliary covers the cost of waiting-room curtains, a TV and VCR for training.

## worship

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### The Music of Christmas

*While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn. (Luke 2:6-7)*

Each year the Christmas Story is made new. For me, this year it was through the song of the angels. The first Christmas carol I remember singing is *Angels We Have Heard on High*. Even before I could read the music or the words, I could join in on the Gloria.

We wait all year for the carols we sing at Christmas because they speak to us of the arrival of the gift of love, born in the Christ Child. Not just any love, but a love that reaches our souls — a love we can draw on, over and over again.

My favorite newer carol, *Hope Is a Star*, says it simply — *when love is a child, there's joy in our song, the last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid*. The love of Christmas is that uncomplicated — and yet so countercultural as well.

The order of the world is turned upside down — the child is at the centre; the people who are normally last in line, move to first place; the weakest among us becomes strong and resilient. No wonder our songs are joyful! The music of Christmas is all about the transformation that is possible, if we remember the love found in the manger.

Christmas singing requires community. Yes, we can be a solo artist, but the carols we sing at Christmas are tangible reminders that we can change the world when we bring our songs to life with other people.

Although we may have sung *Silent Night* at church last night, the Christmas Story isn't silent at all. Whether it was the braying of the donkeys, the mooing of the cows in the manger, the lullaby Mary sang, or the choir of angels that appeared to the shepherds, music was everywhere.

And so, may this Christmas Day find you singing with hope, peace, joy and love, and may that song continue, and travel with you, to wherever your journey takes you in 2026.

Christmas blessings to you all from the Stonewall and Distract Ministerial.

Rev. Mona Denton  
Stony Mountain & Lilyfield United Churches

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Pastoral Charge



# Stony Mountain soprano to headline national ArcherFest concert

By Jennifer McFee

A Stony Mountain soprano experienced a full-circle moment while singing at a festival dedicated to a composer who inspired her interest — and career — in contemporary classical music.

In late November, Métis musician Camryn Dewar performed as the principal vocalist for a celebratory concert called *In Violet Light: Celebration Concert of Violet Archer* during ArcherFest 2025. This event was held in Calgary on Nov. 22 and 23 by the Canadian Music Centre in honour of trailblazing female classical composer Violet Archer. The event was also professionally recorded for

access to audiences across the country and beyond.

Archer, who died in 2000 at the age of 86, was a respected professor and composer who shaped generations of Canadian musicians with her groundbreaking style and composition techniques.

"She is arguably one of the most influential female composers Canada has ever seen in vocal, instrumental, chamber, choral, electronic and educational music," Dewar said. "ArcherFest honours her contribution to Canadian music, with a program featuring her top piano and vocal

Continued on page 7



Dewar is pictured with descendants and family members of Violet Archer during ArcherFest 2025 in Calgary in late November

## Flashback: Remembering Roseisle's historic Snow Valley Ski Hill

By Dennis Young with notes from Cliff McPherson

Three miles west and south of Roseisle, along the Boyne River, sat a stretch of CPR-owned land marked by steep, rolling hills. Locals were skiing there as early as 1927, long before Canadian National Railways developed the site in the late 1930s and named it Snow Valley.

With the start of the Second World War, the hill closed to the public and was instead used by soldiers who trained on the challenging terrain in white camouflage. After the war, CN resumed control, calling in railroad gangs from nearby communities to build a warm-up lodge and coffee shop, a first-aid post, washrooms, and to shape the slopes. Under the supervision of Frank Roy, crews also made and installed the lifts.

Lloyd Keith, Hugh Clearwater, Del Clearwater and Cliff McPherson operated those early lifts, battling homemade equipment, heavy snowfall and a lack of road access. Reaching Snow Valley meant arriving by ski, horse or train. By the mid-1940s, CN began running regular "ski trains" from Winnipeg on Sundays, including a stop in Carman.

A Dec. 5, 1946, edition of the *Dufferin Leader* advertised: "Ski train to Snow Valley Sunday morning leaves Winnipeg at 8:45 a.m. and will stop at Carman about 10:15 to take on passengers." A week later, 20 area residents joined roughly 3,000 Winnipeg skiers for the official opening.

At its peak, as many as 24 coaches arrived at once, pulled by three steam engines and accompanied by dining cars. "I can recall watching the train from the top of the hill," McPherson said. "It looked just like a snake." En-



The Snow Valley chalet was the former Roseisle CN station that was renovated to offer rentals, lunch and a cozy fireplace.

gines used wooden snowplows to punch through deep drifts—sometimes buckling under the weight.

In the late 1940s, new Department of Labour safety standards brought additional challenges. Tow ropes posed risks, and squirrels routinely chewed through safety-device ropes, requiring weekly repairs.

The hill operated with six stretcher toboggans, one engine and a caboose on standby in case an injured skier needed urgent transport to Carman. A six-member ski patrol, including Chic McIvor, kept watch, while Albert Green served as the resident peace officer.

At its height, Snow Valley was considered one of Manitoba's finest ski areas. It featured two tow lines and nine runs—among them Ararat (a 2,000-foot run), Hurricane, Suicide and Nosedive. For the less daring, seven miles of snowshoe trails wound through the area.

Snow Valley shut down in 1952-53 and sat idle until 1961, when CNR Carman agent Gordon Baisley reopened the hill with a single lift and equipment rentals. Under Ron Skelton and Kor Kats, the area revived and even hosted summer dances.

Operations continued intermittently until 1972, when Don and Wynne Leslie took over. They renovated the for-



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

There were 3 lifts and 12 runs from novice to expert at Snow Valley Ski Resort.

mer Roseisle CNR station into a modern chalet and bought substantial rental equipment. By January 1973, Snow Valley was drawing capacity crowds—even without a liquor permit.

Despite strong potential, the Leslies eventually sold to Ruth DeJong and Wayne Smith in the 1980s. Under their direction, Snow Valley expanded to 12 runs with three lifts—a T-bar, Poma and rope tow—and began hosting major events. The 1986 Freestyle Canadian National Team performed moguls, ballet skiing and aials in a showcase billed as "The Greatest Show on Snow." Sunday Nancy Greene lessons drew beginners and families.

But warm weather crippled snowmaking in December 1986, and drought conditions in 1989 left the creek too low to operate the machines. DeJong and Smith closed Snow Valley in August 1989, forcing the 1990 Manitoba Winter Games to relocate skiing events.

After more than 60 years battling weather, equipment and the challenges of running a rural ski hill, Snow Valley ultimately reverted to the private property of Jeff and Joyce Nicolajsen.



# GrainFox provides 2026 market outlook and releases AI assistant

By E. Antonio

GrainFox delivered its annual grain market outlook and announced a new artificial intelligence tool during its Bin to Bank webinar on Nov. 19.

GrainFox chief market analyst Neil Townsend and AgResource Company founder and president Dan Basse outlined the top 10 variables expected to influence grain markets in the year ahead, citing global supply and demand, geopolitics, weather volatility and trade relations as key drivers.

GrainFox's Variable Countdown

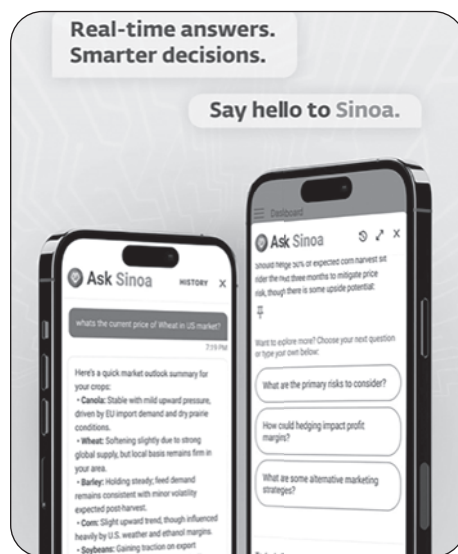
10 – Breakout candidates (barley, oats and durum):

Townsend said tightening global supply and increased offshore market activity are creating renewed interest in several crops. Canada's durum crop was described as "representative," making transactions easier, while oats emerged as the strongest breakout candidate due to U.S. market dynamics and trade relationships.

"If I had to pick one of the three in terms of having a bit of an uprise from here, it would be oats," Townsend said.

9 – Black Sea war and export potential:

Basse said worsening conditions in the region continue to threaten export infrastructure, raising concerns similar to those seen in 2021. While wheat remains oversupplied, he expects global availability to gradually



Sinoa provides users with fact checked, data-backed answers in minutes, setting the program apart from typical AI bots.

decline into next year if disruptions persist.

8 – India's pulse supply:

Townsend said India's domestic supply situation does not currently support higher prices, which could result in stricter import policies. He noted this poses challenges for Canada, adding he does not see conditions that would create a major upswing in pulse prices.

7 – South American weather:

Basse said favourable weather is currently supporting corn and soybean planting, particularly in Brazil.

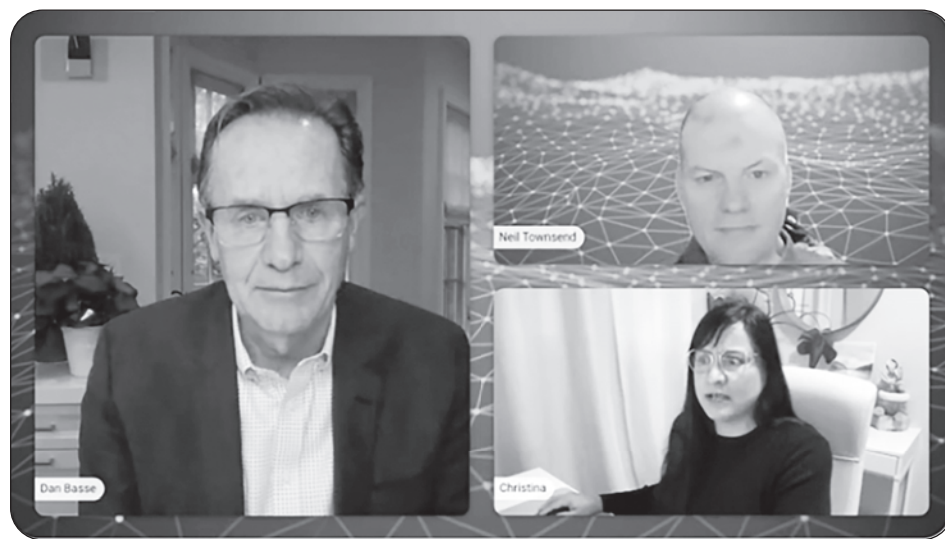


PHOTO SUBMITTED

Neil Townsend, GrainFox Chief Market Analyst, and Dan Basse, founder and president of AgResource Company, addressed their, "Top 10 Variable Countdown" list impacting the 2026 grain market, while Christina Wood, GrainFox director of marketing and communications, announced Sinoa--- GrainFox's new AI tool.

If conditions hold into early January, Brazil could plant a 180-million-tonne soybean crop, though weather risks remain a constant concern.

6 – Macroeconomics:

Townsend said inflation pressures following the pandemic have created affordability challenges, though agriculture has performed relatively well compared to other sectors. He cautioned, however, that economic uncertainty continues, with recession fears frequently resurfacing.

5 – U.S. exports and balance sheets:

Basse said U.S. farmers produced a corn crop comparable in size to the combined corn and soybean output of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. He expects export demand to remain strong, with end stocks for corn, soybeans and wheat remaining ample.

4 – Demand:

Townsend said demand for Canadian wheat is solid but lacks the growth momentum seen in previous years,

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## > ARCHERFEST, FROM PG. 6

works."

For Dewar, the experience surpassed her expectations.

"It was amazing. The coolest part was for me to be there singing some of her music — and music that I've been singing since I was a child. I found her song Green Rain when I was 11 and it just really struck me," she said.

"That was the first time I remember being a young person and hearing a classical song and really being struck by it. I always remembered it and wanted to learn it. That was the first time I was affected by music in that way."

In the song, the speaker reflects on her grandmother's love of green and how she wishes she cherished the last moments she had with her. Dewar recalled how her own grandmother played piano up until a couple weeks before she died at age 98. Some of her fondest memories involved sitting side by side with her grandma, making music together when she was a toddler.

"Green Rain is about a speaker reminiscing about time with her grand-

mother and how she wishes she had greater appreciated her grandmother when she was still alive, which is something I really relate to. I really wish that my grandmother was still around and I still had the opportunity to spend time with her and listen to her stories. And that's what Green Rain is about," she said.

"So, for me, it was amazing to be there singing it and thinking of my own grandmother and my experience of singing that song for half my life. To be singing this in honour of Violet Archer with her own descendants there, it was so powerful and a full circle moment for me."

Adding to the impact, Archer's relatives approached Dewar after the concert to tell her how much they enjoyed her performance.

"It meant so much to me to hear how they loved how I brought her music to life and brought her to life," she said. "It was so beautiful and special."

Looking ahead, Dewar is preparing to go on tour to share her hour-long lecture recital about Indigenous female representation in opera from



STANDARD PHOTOS BY BANDI PHOTOGRAPHY

Stony Mountain soprano Camryn Dewar performing alongside pianist Sandra Joy Friesen during In Violet Light: Celebration Concert of Violet Archer, where Dewar served as principal vocalist for the Canadian Music Centre-hosted event honouring Canadian composer Violet Archer's legacy.

1879 to present. She did her Fulbright Scholarship research on the topic last year at Montclair State University in New Jersey while completing a master's degree in music. She'll be performing six shows in Winnipeg, Cal-

gary and Montreal, with Winnipeg dates at the University of Manitoba on Jan. 16 and Canadian Mennonite University on March 12. More details and dates can be found on her website at camryndewar.com.





**Ecole Carman Elementary  
Madame Findlay-Wolfe  
Grade 1 FI**

Dear Santa,  
I want a big Lego boat for Christmas. I like unwrapping presents. Sometimes I go to my grandma and grandpa's farm on Christmas and have Christmas dinner. My mom and I made Christmas crafts to give to people for presents. I want to give Santa a present.  
Levi B.

I like unwrapping many presents with mom and dad and Phoenix. I love Christmas because I like to make snowmen with my mom and dad. I like making snow angels in my yard. My dad makes a big

snow hill with the tractor for me to slide down.  
Lincoln P.

Christmas means to give to other people. God being born to help the world be a better place. You get to be with your family. Santa, can you show me a picture of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer?  
Titus F.

I like to have fun with my family because it is fun. My family is very nice, so I have fun the day before Christmas. What I really want for Christmas is a 3D printer. They make cool stuff. That is why I like 3D printers.  
Cohen C.

My favourite part of Christmas is spending time with my family. I like baking cookies. I like decorating the tree. I decorate the tree with my mom, my dad, and my brother. My favourite ornament is the one that has my dog's paw on it.  
Maizy H.

I like presents because they have surprises. I love Santa because he gives presents. I love Christmas trees because I like to look at them and I like to help decorate them with my sisters.  
Eric M.

Dear Santa,  
My favourite part of Christmas holidays is unwrapping presents with Dawson and my



mom. I like decorating our Christmas tree. We put ornaments on it. I would like to see Rudolph's shiny red nose.  
Kaelyn C.

I like everything about Christmas. I like wrapping presents with my mom. On Christmas night, my dad let's us sleep under the tree. We have a bonfire outside at my grandma's and there's a real tree decorated outside with presents under it.  
Stetson R.

I like unwrapping presents. I like family time. I made a gingerbread house with my mom.

She helped me put it together and I decorated it with different candies. Another thing I like about Christmas is the snow.  
Lincoln H.

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I want a dirt bike for me and an extra one for my friend Levi so we can ride together at my house. I open presents with my mom, my sisters, and my stepdad. I open presents with my dad too.  
Asher L.

Continued on page 9

# THANK YOU



**TODAY'S NEEDS, TOMORROW'S DREAMS**

**To the amazing individuals and businesses for your gifts to CARMAN AREA FOUNDATION this year and in the past. Your unwavering support and generosity have not gone unnoticed.**

**Only with you are we able to grant back to the organizations within the communities we live and love.**





Continued from page 8

Dear Santa,  
I hope you have a Merry Christmas. I like that Rudolph's nose lights up. It probably turns on when they are flying on Christmas Eve. Santa rides on the sleigh with his reindeer pulling the sleigh.

Rowen M.

I love Christmas. I love decorating the tree with my mom and dad, and my sister and brother. I like that our tree lights flash to different colours. My grandma and papa are going to come to my house. I help my mom make cookies.

Rachel N.

I love Christmas because I like sliding down the big hill at my grandpa's house. I go very fast on my sled. We make snow sculptures with two little shovels that are the same shape and last year I made a huge ice sculpture that looked exactly like my brother on a sled.

Azayla R.

I like unwrapping presents and wrapping presents. I like Christmas holidays because I don't have to go to school. I like to go to Grammie's cabin. I go skating on the ice at the lake. We usually build snowmen on the ice. When we are cold, we go in for hot cocoa.

Madelyn D.

My Papa and Grandma will come to my house for Christmas. They will stay overnight because they live far away. I love opening presents because they will have a surprise in them, even if it isn't what you asked for, it's still a good surprise.

Emmett S.

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like some warm and cozy mitts. I like Christmas because I like the presents and spending time with my family. Jesus was born. We will go to grandma and papa's house in Winnipeg. We will go to my Uma's house in Saskatchewan for another Christmas.

Izabell M.

I like Christmas presents. I like unwrapping presents. I like decorating trees. My tree is tall, sparkly, and pink. My whole family puts ornaments on the tree. My dad puts the star on top. We go skating at the Sperling Rink.

Marilla L.

I like unwrapping presents. I like decorating the Christmas tree. The ornaments are white. Sometimes I put lights outside. I watch Christmas movies. I really want a pink and white stuffy cow for Christmas.

Aster L.

I like unwrapping presents. I like wrapping presents for my cousins. I put the presents under the tree. I decorate the tree. I put lights and a star. I like the ornament from Florida. I put lights on my house.

Barrett N.

#### Carman Elementary Mrs. Minty's Grade 2

Dear Santa

It's almost Christmas! How many elves do you have? This Christmas I would really like a Snake remote Control, Watermelon flavored gum, lego Scrap yard, and dogman #4 book. Merry Christmas!

From Parker

Dear Santa,  
Are the reindeer ready to pull the Sleigh? Can I have a baby panda for Christmas?

From Maddison

Dear Santa.  
HOW are you Santa! How are the elves? Can I please get a little baby ball, a blue OIE please! I wish that my brothers get what they want. What do I leave out for you?

From Macy

For Christmas i want high heels. How are the elves doing? How are the reindeer? Are you ready for Christmas? Who is your favorite elf? — Am I on the naughty list or the good list? I hope it is good. I have been very good this year but sometimes me and my sister fight but it's fine. Do you think that I am good this year? How are you?

From Kathe

Dear Santa, my favourite reindeer is Rudolph because of his red nose. How are you and the elves doing at the North Pole? For Christmas I want a kittie house that comes with a little kittie inside.

From Harper

Dear Santa, am I on the naughty or nice list? Are your elves ready?

I would like to have a watch, clothes, socks, alive pets, books, crafts, water bottles, LolDoll, Harry potty, Doll, paint, Buddys and a backpack.

From Jase

Dear Santa, I would like a Apple Watch that I could play games on. Are my sisters on the nice list? Am I on the nice list?

From Lincoln

Dear Santa, how are your reindeer feeling and who is your favorite reindeer? How are the elves? I want NHL 26, custom Purple pulse stick, 2025 mystery mini, and a soccer ball for Christmas. I also want a pencil, base ball bat, cougars outfit, pants, jacket, a Bauer sweater and a black watch.

From Sloan.

Deer Santa, can I have a PS five with GTA V and a drone and the game NHL 26.

From Logan.

Dear Santa, are you ready for Christmas? Are the elves busy? Am I on the nice list? I hope you're ready for Christmas. I want a camera, lego, clothes, squishies and slippers. I hope my brother gets what he wants. Is my brother on the nice list do you like milk or hot chocolate better?

From Sawyer

Dear Santa, how are you doing? How are the reindeer? Are you busy. I hope you're ready for Christmas. May I please have a lol doll. I wanted a big doll. It is a city doll. How are your elves doing at the north Pole?

From Wrenleigh

Dear Santa, for Christmas I want a diary for Christmas and an American girl doll. My favorite reindeer is Roudolf. He is the leader. I love Santa. You are my favorite. You give to everyone Santa is the real leader..

From Zoey

Dear Santa, how are you doing at the North Pole? How are the reindeer doing? I would like an aircraft carrier. Am I on the naughty or nice list? I would like a mini toy gun. Are you ready for Christmas?

From Kaden

Dear Santa, how are your elves and who is your favorite? How are your reindeer and who is favorite? My favorite season is Christmas. My favorite thing is opening presents. Are your elves working hard? I want some tech decks, mystery, mini, a dirtbike, a puck, a fishing rod, hockey net, tablet and Lego. I would leave you some milk and for the reindeer I would leave carrots

From Easton

Dear Santa, who is your favourite elf? I hope you are ready for Christmas? For Christmas I want a magic mixi doll because they are very cool. I also want a jelly cat.

From Annika

Dear Santa, how is Mrs. Claus doing? For Christmas I would like a fishy rod and a black fly light. Am I on the nice list?

Love Riley

Dear Santa, I hope I get a PS five for Christmas. How are the elves doing. My favourite elf is Buddy. My elf is Buddy. Do you know what my



other elf is named because I don't know what my other elf name is. My favourite reindeer is dancer. Am I on the naughty list or the nice list?

Theo

Age 7, Grade 2

Dear Santa, how are the reindeer? How are the elves? I have so many questions. Also I want a couple power tools because in the summer me and my dad are going to build a shed for Wood. Am I on the nice list because I want diamonds and amethyst. I want a lot of pink quartz. I love rocks Also my favourite reindeer is Rudolph.

From James

Dear Santa, how are the reindeer? Are the elves still busy making toys? Please may I have a watch and earrings with bells for Christmas.

From Alayna

Dear Santa, how are your elves doing? Are they busy wrapping presents or are they playing catch? They might be going cuckoo crazy? Now let's get to what I want for Christmas. I want to have a Nerf gun with a scope please. I also like hot chocolate please pretty please.

From Harvey





# Canada's Food Price Report expects family of four to pay almost \$1,000 more for food in 2026

By Patricia Barrett

As if they weren't already struggling to afford food, Canadian consumers are in for another food price hike that predicts a family of four having to pay almost \$1,000 more for food in 2026.

The 16th annual Food Price Report from Canadian researchers is painting a bleak picture of food costs.

Led by Dr. Sylvain Charlebois from Dalhousie University, a forecasting team and several academics from universities across the country, the report titled *From tariffs to tables: tracking the forces behind Canada's 2026 food prices* expects overall food prices to increase by four to six per cent in 2026.

The report estimates that a family of four, consisting of a man (aged 31-50), a woman (aged 31-50), a boy (aged 14-18), and a girl (aged 9-13), could spend up to a maximum of \$17,571.79, an increase of up to \$994.63 over last year.

"Food affordability remains a top concern for Canadian consumers. A quarter of Canadian households are considered food insecure and nearly 2.2 million people visited food banks in Canada on a monthly basis this year," states the report. "Although inflation was relatively steady in 2025, food prices are still 27% higher than they were five years ago, and consumers are feeling the strain of these higher prices at the grocery store. Nearly 85% of Canadians reported that their household food expenses have increased in the past 12 months. Moving into 2026, this is unlikely to change."

Last year, the researchers predicted a family of four having to spend up to a maximum total of \$16,833.67 on food. The report's prediction was pretty

close. Based on "observed changes" in 2025, a family of four spent 16,577.16, a difference of \$256.51.

Consumers won't be getting a break on the cost of basic food items in 2026.

The researchers are anticipating price increases across major food categories such as bakery (2-4 per cent increase), dairy and eggs (2-4 per cent), vegetables (3-5 per cent), fruit (1-3 per cent) and seafood (1-2 per cent). Meat prices are expected to spike by 5-7 per cent. Restaurant food is anticipated to cost 4-6 per cent more.

To derive their estimates, researchers used a number of factors that can impact Canadian food prices including the effects of the climate crisis on food production, U.S. president Donald Trump's tariffs and trade disputes, shifts in the food manufacturing and retail landscape, labour markets, policy changes and the Canadian dollar outlook.

"This year, all eyes were on the ongoing trade dispute with the United States. The inflationary impacts of tariffs and counter-tariffs will continue to be felt next year as trade tensions reshape the economic landscape. The dispute has created uncertainty in the market, as well as supply chain disruptions and declining demand for Canadian exports," states the report. "With that said, Canada is actively strengthening relationships with other international trading partners to build resilience and global competitiveness. Canada's removal of almost all counter-tariffs on U.S. imports should also help ease upward inflationary pressures on goods."

The federal Liberal government's GST/HST tax break on most food

For 2026, the report uses the same food categories as previous years and makes the predictions show in Table 1:

CATEGORIES	Anticipated Change %	Uncertainty Range*
Bakery	2% - 4%	+/- 0.65
Dairy & Eggs	2% - 4%	+/- 0.40
Fruit	1% - 3%	+/- 0.40
Meat	5% - 7%	+/- 1.12
Other	4% - 6%	+/- 0.87
Restaurants	4% - 6%	+/- 0.67
Seafood	1% - 2%	+/- 0.49
Vegetables	3% - 5%	+/- 0.85
Total Increase in Food Prices	4% - 6%	+/- 0.70

\*The uncertainty range tells you how much the actual price change could reasonably vary above or below the forecast, based on historical volatility and model error (±1 standard deviation).

SAMPLE HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL FOOD COST FOR 2026

**\$17,571.79**

\$994.63 INCREASE FROM 2025

COMPARED TO FIVE YEARS AGO FOOD PRICES ARE

**27% HIGHER**

**CANADA'S FOOD PRICE REPORT 2026**

A family of four are expected to pay \$994.63 more for food in 2026 compared to last year.

items for all Canadians from mid-December 2024 to mid-February 2025 was "staggering" in terms of its effect on food inflation, dropping to -0.6 per cent in January, the first time food inflation had been in negative territory since 2017, states the report.

Depending on what part of the country they live in, Canadians could be paying below or above the national average of food price increases. Last year, Manitoba and Ontario paid more for food but showed "average" changes. British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the three maritime provinces paid above the national average. Alberta, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador paid below the national average increase in the cost of food.

The forecast for 2026 shows Manitoba and B.C. falling below the national average of food price increases.

"Some provinces are projected to shift direction compared to 2025 - for example, British Columbia and Mani-

toba are expected to fall below the national average in 2026 after performing above or at average levels in 2025. In contrast, Ontario and Quebec are forecasted to see above-average food price increases next year," states the report. "The estimates offer important guidance for policymakers and consumers by highlighting emerging regional pressures and potential affordability challenges across the country."

Despite some Canadians facing less severe food price increases, American tariffs will continue to impact inflation and global markets, and it's "unlikely" food prices will notably decrease anytime soon.

"For the food industry, tariffs have meant increased costs and price volatility for businesses, which ultimately get passed down to Canadian consumers at the store," states the report. "While the isolated impact of the tariffs on food prices is difficult to gauge, the tariffs and counter-tariffs have increased grocery costs."

**Season's Greetings!**

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**Merry Christmas**

and a Happy New Year





# Help put ‘Another Brick in LeWall’

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A former Pembina Valley Hawk now playing junior hockey with the Everett Silvertips in Washington has launched a unique campaign to raise funds for mental health.

Raiden LeGall, a Morden native who goaltended for the U18 Hawks from 2021-2023, has teamed up with his goaltending coach, Starbuck-based Tim Morison, on the “Another Brick in LeWall for Mental Health Awareness” merchandise campaign featuring a custom Lego mini-figure version of LeGall in his Silvertips uniform.

They’re selling T-shirts, hoodies, and stickers with the design, with proceeds being split between Camp Erin in Washington, which provides grief support for youth who have experienced the loss of a loved one, and Eden Health Care Services right here in Manitoba for its mental health programming.

In just a few weeks, they’ve already raised over \$11,000, with sales coming in from across both Washington and Manitoba as word spreads about the campaign.

“Neither of us expected it to go this big,” LeGall said. “It’s been pretty cool to see.”

Mental health is something that affects the wellbeing of everybody—and you never really know what someone might be going through at any given time, LeGall observed.



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Above: Tim Morison and his wife Nikki wearing the Another Brick in LeWall gear on sale in support of mental health. Above, right: Raiden LeGall with Morison and his son Mavryk and the Grinch version of the logo that started it all. Right: The logo features a mini-figure version of LeGall in his Silvertips gear.

“Talking about what’s going on and not hiding it is so important,” he said. “Keeping it to yourself will only ever make it worse.”

“If we can help just one person by talking about this, that’s all we set out to do.”

The topic of mental health is personal as well for Morison, who shared a bit of the back story behind this initiative.

“My wife and I, we went through a stillborn in 2022. For me, I’d never gone through any sort of depression or anything like it before, and then obviously when it comes to Christmastime, you feel it the most, you’re just kind of dwelling on things.”

Last year, Morison designed a logo featuring a Lego version of The Grinch as a hockey player—a play on the fact fans were playfully calling LeGall “LeGrinch.”

“It was a teddy bear toss game where when the home team scores, everybody throws teddy bears on the ice and they donate them to different causes,” Morison explained. “Raiden had a shutout game, so they couldn’t throw the bears until the end of the game ... then on social media they started calling him Le Grinch.”

Morison took the idea and ran with it, selling LeGrinch merchandise to raise funds for mental health. The whole thing came together rather quickly but still managed to sell a dozen or so shirts and raise a modest amount for the cause.

“It was very spur of the moment,” Morison said. “But I’d always wanted to do something, just because I went through



so much, battled through it, and now I feel like I’m the strongest I’ve ever been. And I’ve helped Raiden with his own mental health when it comes to playing hockey, so we have this bond together.”

The duo started thinking how they might go even bigger with it this year, and the “Another Brick in LeWall” cam-

Continued on page 12

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## 'Over the top' winner



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Carman Dufferin Communities in Bloom (CIB) issued a festive challenge to local businesses this December, encouraging them to help send Carman "over the top" with Christmas decorations. After touring the community, two CIB members selected the Carman Dufferin Historical Museum as the top display. Ann Holmes of CIB presented Cheryl and Dennis Young with homemade treats as a prize in recognition of their efforts. CIB extended thanks to all businesses that took part in brightening the community for the holiday season, with special mention to Evensong and One Insurance as runners-up.

*Season's Greetings*

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## > GRAINFOX AI, FROM PG. 6

particularly with limited expansion in biofuel initiatives.

"It's not that demand's poor, it's just that it doesn't have that built-in dynamic growth that it had for many years," he said.

3 – U.S.–China relations:

Basse described the relationship as an ongoing economic conflict, particularly around soybeans, and said the global ag trade landscape is becoming increasingly fragmented as countries align with competing power centres.

2 – Canada–China relations:

Townsend said unresolved trade disputes, including restrictions on Canadian canola, continue to slow negotiations. He added that the lack of perceived equality between the two countries complicates efforts to restore full market access.

1 – Donald Trump:

Basse said former U.S. president Donald Trump remains the biggest wildcard in global markets due to uncertainty around tariffs, trade policy and political influence.

"I have not been at an ag conference this year that didn't bring up President Trump as being the big unknown," he said.

GrainFox also announced the launch of Si-

noa, an AI-powered grain market assistant it describes as a major AgTech advancement heading into 2026.

"Sinoa is a major leap forward for AI-powered ag intelligence," said Mark Lepp, CEO and founder of GrainFox. "This isn't just a chatbot — it's an AI grain market analyst built for real-world decision-makers."

According to GrainFox, Sinoa draws from more than 20 years of proprietary data, including historical pricing, fundamentals and seasonality, to generate real-time, explainable insights tailored to individual users. Responses are built through live analysis rather than prewritten answers.

"Producers and commercial agribusinesses don't just get a market summary — they get a deeper, personalized understanding of what that information means for them," said Richard Surrendrakumar, GrainFox's chief product officer.

Access to Sinoa requires a GrainFox membership subscription. More information, including a recording of the Bin to Bank webinar, is available through GrainFox's website and social media channels.

## > ANOTHER BRICK WALL, FROM PG. 7

paign was born, playing off LeGall's nickname as a goalie and featuring partnerships with the Silvertips Booster Club and the Lego store Bricks and Minifigs South Everett, who got the green light from Lego on the new logo design.

The success of the project has floored them both.

"I thought we're just going to sell a couple T-shirts," Morison said. "We're a couple hundred dollars short of \$12,000 right now. It's amazing."

"It was just two guys sitting on a golf course going, 'How do we make a difference?'" he added. "It honestly blew up more than we ever thought it would."

While they're thrilled to be raising so much money for two very worthy causes, Morison echoes LeGall in stressing they also hope this will get people thinking about mental health and how it's okay to seek help with whatever you might be going through.

"My goal is just for people to talk," he said, noting the wall design is representative of how every single person—every brick—holds up the others. "It's about building a foundation, a strong foundation ... one brick at a time, one person at a time, you can make a difference and

make something stronger."

Eden Foundation marketing and events manager Tyson Deceuninck said they're thrilled that LeGall and Morison wanted to support the work of Eden in this way.

"It was an incredible surprise. This is a guy who's born and raised in Morden, he's playing out of Washington now, and he's thinking of how he can help his hometown," he said. "We can't be more thankful that he's thinking of people back home who also need support. We're so happy with what they're doing with this."

Eden's half of the funds raised will go to support their subsidized counselling program, Recovery of Hope, which ensures help is accessible to everyone that needs it. Some of the funds will also go towards the agency's housing and employment support programs and to meet patient needs at the Winkler psychiatric hospital not covered by government funding.

You can purchase your Another Brick in LeWall gear online at [https://my.cheddarup.com/c/another-brick-in-lewall-for-mental-health-awareness/items?utm\\_source=ig&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_content=link\\_in\\_bio](https://my.cheddarup.com/c/another-brick-in-lewall-for-mental-health-awareness/items?utm_source=ig&utm_medium=social&utm_content=link_in_bio).

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# Skate with Santa brings holiday cheer to Miami



STANDARD PHOTOS BY JOLENE CALLUM AND PAIGE BAXTER

Santa joins young players on the ice during Skate with Santa Hockey Day on Dec. 13 at the Lloyd Orchard Community Arena in Miami. The busy day featured a pancake breakfast, skate with Santa and multiple minor hockey games — including U7 Miami versus Manitou, U11 Carman Female versus Red River, U13 Morden Female versus Red River, and U11 Morden Gold versus MacGregor — drawing about 75 people and raising funds for Miami Hockey and the Lloyd Orchard Community Arena.

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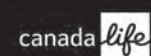
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# Christmas STORIES

## FIRST

### THE SECRET MAGIC OF MISTLETOE MEADOWS

By Amy Penner, grade 6, Carman

Somewhere high above the rooftops, Santa's sleigh glided silently through the starry night, bells jingling like distant laughter. The wind whispered around the reindeer, sharing secrets of the world below. Then—a sudden bump! Comet nudged Cupid, and Santa's bag of presents wobbled, slipped, and tumbled toward Earth, spinning like a silver comet through the snowflakes.

It was Christmas Eve in the tiny town of Mistletoe Meadows. Liam pulled his scarf tight and stepped outside. Snow twirled like tiny ballerinas, tickling his cheeks, while the cold kissed his nose. Something unusual glimmered in the white blanket—a bright, twinkling bag nestled among the snowflakes. Liam froze. He recognized it immediately: Santa's bag!

"What should I do?" he whispered, grabbing a pencil and scribbling a quick letter to Santa, hands trembling with excitement. That night, sleep was elusive. When it finally came, it brought a terrible dream: Christmas had been canceled. Snowflakes shivered on the dream-wind, and the world felt eerily quiet, like a house holding its breath.

On Christmas morning, Liam leapt out of bed and ran outside, boots crunching in the snow like tiny drums. The snow dazzled him, sparkling like diamonds. At the spot where the bag had been, only the tracks of Santa's sleigh remained. Liam's chest swelled with pride. "I really did it! Somehow, he saved Christmas!"

Just as he turned to go inside, he saw them—Santa and his reindeer! Santa perched on the chimney, his coat glowing like a firelight. Liam felt warmth rise through him as his feet lifted off the ground, floating toward the jolly man. On the roof, he fed the reindeer, whose noses glimmered like tiny rubies, and gave Santa a big bear hug.

"You must promise," Santa whispered, "not to tell anyone. The magic only works if it's a secret." Liam nod-

ded, heart thumping like a drum, and Santa winked before floating away with a jingling laugh. Liam's eyes sparkled, and he could hardly stop smiling.

Returning to the ground, Liam watched the reindeer streak across the sunrise. His chest felt light, like sunlight trapped inside him. Inside, he paused, awestruck. The Christmas lights glowed softly, mistletoe shimmered like jewels, and shadows danced across the walls like playful elves. The scent of pine and cinnamon wrapped around him like a cozy blanket.

Tiptoeing down the hallway, careful not to wake anyone, Liam slipped into his room. He climbed into bed and pulled the blankets up to his chin. Later, the door creaked.

"Liam," his mom whispered, "Merry Christmas, sweetheart. Time to wake up."

He yawned, pretending he'd been asleep. But when he followed her downstairs, he froze. The house was glowing. Twinkling lights shimmered across the windows, and the mistletoe seemed to wink at him. His parents stood in awe.

"Did you decorate all this?" his mom asked.

"No... I didn't touch a thing," he said softly.

Liam pressed his lips together, trying not to grin. He knew exactly who had been there. Stepping closer to the tree, he let the warm glow fill his chest. It was Christmas morning, the house shimmered with magic, and Liam held a secret so bright it felt like a little star beating in his heart. He whispered a quiet "thank you" to Santa and the reindeer, feeling a happiness that would last forever.

## SECOND

By Leah Hofer, Grade 8, Maple Creek School

Long ago, in the 1800's, near London, was an orphanage where 100 children had gone to bed that cold Christmas eve night without food. Or, without enough food to satisfy their hunger. The headmistress of Hope Orphanage, called Miss Mama by the children, had spent the last of the money left in her bank account last night, buying a few loaves of day-old bread and some diluted milk for supper. Without a hope left in her heart, the weary headmistress fell to her knees beside her bed and poured out her troubles and woes to God.

At that same wintry evening, at the north pole, a very jolly man, dressed in red, was on his way to his sleigh.

Trailing behind him was a long line of tiny men carried piles of gifts and presents to the waiting sleigh. Not far off, about 20 elves tied harnesses on coupled reindeer. There was Dasher and Dancer, Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid, and Donner and Blitzen, and the leader, Rudolph the red nosed reindeer. When Santa was ready to go, he at last turned his attention to a very nervous elf who had been wanting his attention for a long time. "Yes, Candy?" asked Santa. Anxiously the little man answered; "Um, well, ummm, well you see the, well..." "What is it?" Prodded Santa kindly, for he knew how anxious elves could get. "Well, we accidentally made 100 extra presents than was required!" The elf finished in a rush.

Uncertainty, the elf looked at the silver bell on the tip of his shoe. "Well... I guess we will find a place for them." Santa reassured Candy. Relieved, the small man lifted his face and smiled his biggest smile. Santa quickly smiled back before announcing: "Almost 11, we've got to go!"

Back at the orphanage, Miss Mama got off her knees and walked to the window. Outside large snowflakes had started to fall. Although the scene seemed to relax her, she knew that sleep would not come for a long time for her. As she stood there, she leaned her elbows on the sill. Under the cushion was a strange lump. "I thought Eliza had swept under the cushions! Did she miss this window? Ohh!" Lifting the faded multicolored cushion, she saw a small roll of bills. With tears in her eyes she read the note attached to it. "With all our love, we give this 200\$ to Hope Orphanage. Use it as you wish. -The Swifts"

Miss Mama smiled through her tears as she remembered the Swift couple, already in their 40's, and how they had showed kindness and caring to the children. "Bless their dear hearts!" the good woman murmured. She knew that the amount would feed the children for a few days, if not a whole week. "Thank you, God!" she said. Now all that she wished for was a small gift for each child.

On his way back, Santa looked to the landscape below him. He could not help noticing the large building below him. Something in him mind told him that there were 100 orphan children in that building, without even a hope for a Christmas present. Before he could grasp what had happened he had hosted the sack with the 100 extra presents out of the sleigh, landing them on the front doorstep of the orphanage.

As Miss Mama looked out, seeing the

sack of presents, she could not help hearing the jolly man call out: "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

## THIRD

### ONE CHRISTMAS DAY...

By Grayson Findlay, Grade 6, Carman

I was walking in my backyard. It was a beautiful, bright white, winter day. I saw some tracks in the distance in the glistening snow. The tracks were pulling me towards them out of curiosity. So I walked over, and to my surprise I saw what I thought were deer tracks. I followed the tracks until I looked around the corner of my house and saw that Santa and his reindeer had crashed into the snow! At first I was kinda scared, but I then became excited, and filled with shock from what I saw. I finally got enough courage to go over there, but I was still very confused, "What if it's a prank?". I walked over slowly so I didn't spook him out of his pants. When I got over to him and the reindeer, you could see how shocked he was. To try and remain secretive, Santa tried to say that I was dreaming, but I was not going to fall for that old trick. I thought of running away to tell my mom, but I thought it might ruin the moment, and she would probably think I'm crazy, and had too much candy. If I did tell someone I'd most likely get sent to the naughty list very fast, as fast as me eating candy. I asked Santa what happened, and apparently he ran into a big flock of birds that scared the reindeer, so they dove down. That wasn't a smart idea, because I clearly see how that worked out for them. The biggest problem is the reindeer are missing! I was in lots of shock, "What if Christmas gets ruined! I couldn't just sit around while Christmas got ruined, I had to do something. I told my mom I'm going to a friend's house, and ran out the house like a jet to look for the deer. After what felt like ages, I finally found the first deer. There was one problem, the deer was in someone's YARD! I finally managed to lure the deer to Santa with an apple. I went back to look for more deer, and surprisingly I found the second one was on the road blocking cars, so I used a carrot this time to lure him back. The third deer was drinking from someone's pond so I used a carrot to lure him back, because they like them the most. After ages I found the fourth, and fifth, deer were ramming each other with their antlers to assert dominance

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over each other. The scary part was that their antlers sounded like they were going to shatter like ice. This was the tricky part. I had Santa call them, because they obeyed him. We shockingly worked and we got them back safely. The sixth and seventh were looking at some Christmas decorations thinking they were alive. Then Santa called them over and it took a couple tries until they would not budge. So we grabbed the Christmas decorations and lured the reindeer back to the sleigh with them. Then after we gathered all the deer we worked on getting the sleigh back up and running I ran in my garage and grabbed some tools like a hammer and drill. Then we drilled pieces to the walls that broke off. Then we drilled the skis back onto the bottom of the sleigh. Then the sleigh was looking brand new and it worked perfectly fine. I ran back inside to finish having Christmas with my family. When the day was over I could barely sleep. That is how I saved Christmas

## THE CHRISTMAS MISHAP!

By Keenya

It was the night before Christmas and all the elves were stressed, they thought about what was to happen next. Santa in all his glory calmed everyone down; he reassured them that everything would be fine. As they loaded the sleigh they felt much better all cozied up in their Christmas sweaters. They threw the sacks onto the sleigh and hopped on ready to play. The reindeer got geared up, ready to fly as they wished the rest of the elves goodbye. They took off and started flying through the cool, fresh air. Santa dropped into chimneys without a care. He ate cookies and drank milk, he even took carrots for the reindeer. As they were flying through the air one of the many sacks fell off the sleigh! The velvet sack hit the ground with a thump and lay there as a big red lump. A girl sitting by her window waiting to hear the words Ho Ho Ho, saw this scene and her eyes did beam. What should she do, she thought as she watched the sack? She decided she must do something so she got on her pink, sparkly boots and headed out into the snowy outdoors. Her face felt cold as she ran towards the red velvet sack. She knew she couldn't leave it there looking so sad. When she reached the sack she put her hand out to feel it and for some reason it felt like a giant warm hug. She felt scared and confused, what should she do next and what if these people don't get their presents. The only thing she could think of was to scream, so that's what she did! She screamed and she screamed looking like she was about to cry. She was hopeful that Santa was nearby and would hear her mighty screams. She screamed for 1

hour straight just laying there waiting for a Christmas miracle. Suddenly out of nowhere she heard bells jingling, elves talking, reindeer bellowing, and the famous HO, HO, HO. She looked up in the dark, midnight, sky and saw it, a beautiful, sleek, red sleigh with gold detailing floating above her. As the sleigh landed beside her jolly old Saint Nick stepped out and said "HO, HO, HO, thank you finding my presents young lady, without you some deserving little children wouldn't have gotten their presents tonight." The girl couldn't believe her eyes, she was talking to THE SANTA what should she do, what should she say she thought. All that came to her mind was to say "No Problem" so that's what she said in her soft, calm voice. Then she handed the sack to him and said "when will you come back?" "Well next Christmas of course." Santa took the sack and said a jolly goodbye. As the sleigh took off she yelled back "Goodbye Santa See You Next Year." "HO, HO, HO, Merry Christmas" yelled Santa, And with that the little girl headed home feeling excited about Christmas morning! Santa was about to head home but first he had to drop the rest of the presents into red brick chimneys. Feeling grateful and satisfied about what he had accomplished and what a mishap it could have been without that little girl., Santa headed home to the North Pole. So this Christmas remember your presents might have been lost, but Santa will always find a way to bring them to you. I hope you enjoyed this story.

## CHRISTMAS

By Chloe Owen, Grade 6 Carman

The night of Christmas, Santa's sleigh rides above houses. He's still eating his most recent reindeer shaped cookie, he's not paying attention to the pack of presents that are tilting to the edge like the Eiffel tower! BUMP! Santa Looks back "where's the presents?" He says starting to panic. He gets up, crumbles spill over the seats as he climbs towards the back, looking over the edge. His heart drops when he sees the bag swagging on the end of the sleigh. He tries to reach for it but...it was too late. In the Johnson's house Peter was still up watching a Christmas movie "Peter! Take Piper for a walk before bed!" His mom calls out from the kitchen. "Fine!" Peter yells back as he pauses the movie "but mom, I'm at the good part!" Peter whines striding towards the kitchen "You shouldn't be whining Peter, or else Santa is going to give you coal!" His mom says sternly "Santa is not real!" Peter says. Poppy, Peter's younger sister screams "Santa's not real! Mommy is that true!" "Santa Claus is fully real from head to toe, now go take Piper for a walk!" Peter's mom says angrily. Peter groans, grabbing his jacket "Piper, it's



# Christmas STORIES

time for a walk!" Peter yells annoyed. Piper comes trotting down the stairs having her pink leash in her mouth. Peter laughs, yanking the leash out of her mouth and clipping it to her collar. They walk outside, as the snow falls on top of them. They both start walking down the street passing by houses that are dark and some have their Christmas trees lit. Peter and Piper are about to walk by a garbage can but a big THUMP happens. Peter jumps back a bit, but Piper just barks at the garbage can "Piper shush people are trying to sleep!" Peter whispers. Piper barks again but Peter ignores Piper by walking towards the garbage. Peter looks inside, there it stands, a sparkly fat red bag. "Holy c-" Piper barks again but Peter shushes her. Peter slowly grabs the bags slowly placing it in the snow. Gold handwriting that stands out in the Moonlight that reads, "Santa Claus". Realization hits Peter like a rock "S-santa is real!" he says in disbelief. Piper goes up to the bag sniffing it "Wait if this is Santa's bag then.. how will he deliver his presents!" Peter starts thinking but of course it was interrupted by crunchy footsteps coming from the other side of the sidewalk he turns around and of course there's another person. Peter grabs the bag, throwing it over his shoulder walking back to the house. Piper walks behind Peter even though her leash isn't on. As Peter gets to the house, he stands in front of their garage "This better work" Peter says under his breath. He opens the garage door. The door creaks and screams but it manages to open halfway Peter thinks... he gets an idea "What if I save Christmas!" Peter thinks. He decides to go deliver the presents because He thought if I were a little kid and I didn't get my presents I would be very sad. As the night went on Peter delivered all the presents thanks to the names that were written on the presents. That night Peter saved Christmas with his courage and bravery, not just a little kid that would leave the red bag in the garbage and his dog Piper annoying him.

## SANTA CLAUS!

By Charlotte Neufeld, Grade 5, Miami

It's Christmas Eve, the time when most people believe in Santa Claus! He doesn't pause, he's always jolly walking through halls decked with holly, giving gifts to boys and girls who are not naughty. If you're bad you get coal!

He goes down the hole of the chimney sweep.

In the sky his reindeer leap, there's Dasher and Dancer and Comet and Cupid and Donner and Vixen and Prancer and Blitzen and most of all Rudolph!

There they go in the mist, while Santa looks at his list.

He has gifts to give and no time to waste but when there's cookies he needs a taste.

His elves make toys like cars and dolls and toys made of small metal bars, while the kids sleep Santa doesn't make a peep.

At the North Pole, Santa has his role of wearing red and black with white fluff. If he were to go back in time he might have been tough.

The gift wrap is so colorful, like red, blue and yellow. Why Santa's such a great fellow!

There's a large Christmas tree in the middle of the town with a star topper, some toppers made of gold or silver, and a couple made of copper.

He only goes at night, soon he will take flight.

He doesn't miss a single home; you might even get a comb.

You better be in bed when he comes. Oh! Also, don't forget to send him a letter, otherwise he won't know what you'll get! But he's not coming just yet, put on your pajamas and brush your teeth, and you better have hung up your wreath!

There are so many ornaments on the trees and make sure nothing will freeze.

He might give you kittens, and don't forget to put on your mittens, or he might get you a water bottle or maybe even an axolotl.

You might even get money or a bunny or a pair of socks or a fox or even a fox wearing socks in a box!

Tick-tock goes the clock, Santa is almost here, he is very near, he comes every year.

You might also get snacks like chocolate or bubble gum but make sure that when you're outside you don't get numb.

Don't forget to wear your gloves and you should always remember that Santa Claus loves everyone whether they're big or small or short or tall or if they won the lottery or even if they do pottery!

Santa says Ho! Ho! Ho! But to go to a

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house he needs to go low, low, low. He must go to every country overnight, but he must go when there is a ray of sunlight.

There are stockings which look like boots but inside there is loot (also known as candy); stockings are pretty handy!

There is also Mrs. Claus, she makes the Christmas laws, she also loves baking and making Christmas crafts. Mrs. Claus laughs at every joke, but you better not poke your elf on the shelf. Mrs. Claus needs her glasses otherwise she won't know where to find the molasses for gingerbread with some icing that's red.

Santa carries his sack right on his back, he will, definitely not slack because he is full of Christmas joy. Now he is about to give a very special toy to a little boy named Chris; he cannot miss a single house, and he can't knock a shingle off with his sleigh. Children can't sleep so Santa must not peep; he must put presents under the tree, but then he must flee.

Merry Christmas.

## WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME!

By Austyn Angers, Grade 5, Age 10 Miami School

Christmas isn't about presents. It's about family and joy.

My favorite thing about Christmas is the food. I love the food on Christmas Eve. My personal favorite is mashed potatoes.

My family means the most to me. Santa Claus is one of my favorite parts on Christmas because at 12 o'clock he goes to deliver presents and that's why I like Santa. Joy and happiness are how jolly Christmas is. The decorations are what make me happy.

At the store, I always ask my mom to see the decorations, and we get to see them, but in one big store it's like one big diamond shining in my eyes. Then we must go. That's my least favorite part. So, we go home and dad starts dinner. When we get home there is a smoker then at dinner we talk about Christmas Eve.

That we get to watch Christmas lights at night. So, two hours later we went to watch Christmas lights in Morden. Then we went to the store, then we went home to watch a movie called Home Alone and had snacks.

On the way home mom said to me, how was your time there? It was fine. I

said, "You know that there are only six days left till Christmas day."

The next day we went sledding. So as the day went I got hot chocolate, and I got to see Santa but there was traffic then we got to a hotel. (Two days till Christmas).

When I woke up that morning, I asked mom if I could play in the snow.

"Sure," replied mom, "but first get dressed, eat breakfast, brush your teeth." That's what I did, I got my outdoor stuff on and went out the door. Shaylee wanted to build a snowman. Then we got to it. After 50 minutes, we made snow angels and played in a cafe. When we got cold, we got cold and went inside. Mom gave us hot chocolate. It was so hot that my hands were cold. It felt so numb and nice at the same time. We watched a movie before supper then after supper we watched another movie and then we went to bed. My dream present is a puppy, I whispered in mom's ear. Maybe tell Santa about your letter. Ok mom.

Then all a sudden, I was dreaming about Christmas in my head. Then it was Christmas Eve. I was so excited to see my family in Swan Lake. I got ready to go, then we left the house to Swan Lake. We got there and stayed there for about 6-7 hours, then it was bedtime. We set milk and cookies on the table for Santa and went to bed.

"Love you," said Mom.

"Good night mom, love you too."

Then it was twelve o'clock and everyone was asleep. I heard a "thump, thump, thump!" on the top of the roof. I knew it was Santa! I got out of bed and tip-toed down the stairs and I saw him standing right in front of me. He heard a "creak" on the floor.

"Uh-oh!" I spoke. Then with a flick of his magic I was back in bed. I woke up that morning, then Shaylee woke up, so did Mom Dad. Shaylee opened their gifts. Shaylee's gift was a cat. Mom's gift was 2 000 dollars and a new pair of socks. Dad's gift was a new truck and a new pair of socks too. My gift was a puppy! I named the dog, Roo!

## LOST RUDOLPH

By Parker Bickford, Grade 4, Age 9, Miami

Once upon a time there was someone named Jerry. One day Jerry was exploring Antarctica and little did he know he was near the North Pole. He was just getting to know the place better and then he saw it. A bunch of footprints in the snow. They went super far

but then he got an idea, I should explore, and that's what he did. When he got to the end of the footprints, he saw six branches like things sticking out of the snow. One little red glowing ball. So, he dug and dug and dug until he saw a face. Then he dug faster. The whole body was uncovered.

He yelled, "IT'S RUDOLPH."

"Yeh, who else did you think I was?"

Jerry was shocked not only that his parents lied to him about Santa and the reindeer aren't real. Also, the reindeer can talk.

"So do you know exactly where we are?" Rudolf asked.

"Yes," Jerry said.

"Oh, ok so where's the North pole???"

"First of all, I didn't even know you, Santa, and the other reindeer were real!!!! Now you think I know where the North pole is!!"

"Gees someone is a little grumpy."

"Yah but it's not like it's Christmas or anything special today," Jerry said.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh....."

There was a long pause.

"What? What?" Jerry yelled.

"It's the day we test fly Santa's sleigh," Rudolf said.

"Oh no," Jerry said. "How long until you have to fly it?"

"In two, maybe three hours."

"Ok, we have some time. So, do you know where you came from? All the way from your footprints. They probably show where you came from," said Jerry.

"There are two reasons that doesn't work. One, I flew some of the way and fell. That's why you just see footprints appear. Two, we are in Antarctica, footprints disappear when they are left alone for a long time."

"But we haven't left them for that long," Jerry said. "It's been ten minutes. Oh, at least I know where my research base is so we can go there. How long were you under the snow?" Jerry asked.

"I don't know, I lost track of time," Rudolf said.

"Oh, ok let's head back."

Twenty minutes later Jerry and Rudolf were back at the research base.

Rudolf was hungry after their adventure and so was Jerry. Jerry was looking for a good snack to eat and some food for Rudolf. Then Jerry found a sandwich and he gave a sandwich to Rudolf. Jerry found a plate with some gingersnap cookies on it. After they were filled up, they headed off to find the North Pole.

They searched for so long and they just couldn't find the North Pole. I mean the North Pole is hidden for a reason. After an hour of searching they couldn't find it. Rudolf only had a half hour left before flying the sleigh. All hope seemed lost.

Then they heard a noise and then again. What they heard was "HO HO HO HO HO!!!!"

Santa was looking for them!!!! They

had to get his attention somehow. But they couldn't think of an idea.

"Maybe yelling his name, "Jerry suggested. So, they tried it.

"SANTA!!!! SANTA!!!!!! SANTA!!!!!! Over here." The wind is too loud up there.

They started thinking and thinking and pacing and pacing and then Jerry got an idea. Use your super bright nose to get his attention and it worked. They flew back to the North Pole in time so they could test fly the sleigh for Christmas, so they knew it worked.

## JULIE AND THE MAGICAL VILLAGE

By Josephine Penner, Grade 5, Age: 10, Miami School

One very early morning, a girl named Julie snuggled up in her bed, and that night she had been tossing and turning, but what she didn't know was that there was a new snow globe on her nightstand and she accidentally knocked it off! When the snow globe shook it transported her and her family to a magic winter wonderland. When she and her family woke up that morning, they didn't suspect anything because it had transferred, their house too!

That morning was the day before Christmas and they were going to go to their grandparents' house, but when they went outside nothing looked the same because they were in a winter wonderland. It looked snowy and magical. Once Julie and her family got all bundled up, they went outside and explored! When they were exploring, they found a cute little village. As they came closer, they saw that the tiny things that they thought were people were Elve's! When they were walking it seemed like the little Elves knew exactly what to do and where to go. When Julie and her family were walking, they had to ask a bunch of Elves where to go. Some of the Elves said the way to Santa's workshop, some of them said the way to Santa's Candy and Cocoa Shop, and then one said the way to Santa's house! When Julie and her family heard the way to Santa's house that got them going! Julie and her brother had always wanted to meet Santa, so when they stepped in, they were excited!

Their Mom and Dad said, "Come down kids."

The kids said, "ok."

When they found Santa sitting in his chair. Santa said, "Now which one of you wants to come on my lap first." Julie raised her hand. When Julie sat down. Santa asked, "Now, what would you like for Christmas?" Julie whispered something in his ear. When Julie's brother went up and whispered something in Santa's ear, he was up there for a while.

When the brother came down Julie

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asked her brother what he asked for and he said it was a secret. Julie was surprised that her brother didn't tell her because usually he tells Julie everything.

When Julie's mom and dad walked out, they said they were next and Julie and her brother said how about the Candy and Cocoa Shop. I mean an Elf told us where it is.

"Anyway sure," said Mom and Dad. When Julie and her family stepped in, they all could smell the cocoa and candy canes! When they tried it, it tasted just as good as it looked! Once Julie and her family were done eating the delicious snack their parents said that they should get back, but the only thing was that they didn't know how to get back!

Back at Julie and her parents' house, one of Julie's friends came over and knocked on the door. No one answered so she checked to see if the door was locked, it was! Julie's best friend had always been curious, so she decided to go in. When she stepped in, she went straight to Julie's room. Julie's best friend saw a new snow globe and decided to shake it! All of a sudden, everything started to shake! Once everything was done shaking Julie saw her best friend standing in front of her!

Afterwards Julie and her family got to have a lovely supper and dessert at their grandparents' house! That is the crazy story of Julie and the magical village! With a magical end!

## WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN TO YOU?

By Jaxson Vandersluis, Kindergarten, Carman

Christmas to me means Jesus. I help my family bake a birthday cake for him. We get to open up Christmas presents!

## WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN TO YOU?

By Parker Vandersluis, Grade 2, Carman

Christmas to me means it is Jesus's Birthday! We have lots of family time together. We play games, play outside, and open presents! Also we have no school for 14 days when it's Christmas!

## A WONDERFUL WINTER WONDER LAND

By Jack Yeo, grade 6, Carman

There is snow everywhere, Christmas is coming, everyone in town is celebrating the first snow! ... except drew he preferred summer the only thing he liked about winter is christmas and the only thing he likes about christmas is presents but last year his parents caught on and know all he has is a boring snow globe his parents urge to come sing with the town he knows

he wants to go but he spent so long becoming the cool kid he thought he had to protect his honour. He gets caught up in all the emotions, he swings his arms, he hits the snow globe and goes into a magical world. its a winter wonder land but instead of being mad or upset he felt soothing different worry he searched the premise for someone he saw an elf he never believed elves but he thought i will take what i can get as he ran to the elf and said excuse me sir can you please help me the elf replied a change in manners now thats what i call a good start what drew said i should have introduced my self the elf my name is jerry you must be the disbeliever huw drew said in confusion every year we bring one greedy kid how hates the christmas season and we give them the true meaning of christmas how do i get back drew said with a worried tone when you learn your lesson said jerry but my mom is probably worried sick do not worry jerry said time is different here every 5 years is one second to them you will be back in a millisecond so time works different kinda like plants said drew yes said jerry just much more extreme and with a purpose oh thats interesting drew said indeed it is said jerry know the real journey begins jerry muttered to him self.

After much talk as hard as body-chucking a rhino he learned the true meaning of being together.

## THE LOST GIFTS

By Ellie Vandersluis, Grade 6, Carman

I was walking home when the cold nipped at my cheeks like a playful elf. In the corner of my glimmering eye I saw Santa with his laughter bouncing through the air like jolly bells. His eyes shined bright though the cold winter night. I thought to myself that I can't possibly be Saint Nick. While doubt tiptoed through my mind I thought, why could I see Santa on the 24th? I kept walking with the thought still in my head when thump! There was a loud bang that shook the night's sky. I looked over and there stood Santa, with his rosy cheeks shining as bright as ornaments. It looked as though he was looking for something with his red suit glowing softly. I have always wanted to see Santa. It was my dream, so I ran like I was sneaking up on my prey. Then I climbed in. Before I could second guess myself, the sleigh lifted in the air carrying me up like a soft breeze. There was a thought rolling through my mind saying "Should I have got on the sleigh?", should I ..... say hello?. I closed my eyes, dreaming softly about what I'm about to see. Then I woke worried because there was a roar of the sleigh landing that woke up the whole world. I peeked over the sleigh like a squirrel and I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I said loudly, "Are you really Santa?" He looked over in a surprised but jolly

way and said "What are you doing here? You should be in your house!". I explained what happened to try to get him to maybe let me stay. Then right then, there was Mrs. Clause, holding a cup of warm peppermint hot chocolate. "Who is your friend?" she said. Santa said "She climbed into the sleigh when I was seeing where all the presents went. "WHAT DO YOU MEAN LOOKING FOR THE TOYS??" Mrs Clause said in a worried voice. Santa replied with a worried look on his face, "I was delivering all of the toys and then they started to lean when I was taking a wide turn. They all fell down. So I went to the ground as quietly as I could, but somehow she saw me and managed to sneak in the sleigh when I was looking where the toys went." I stood there in awkwardness, watching as they talked. Then Santa said, "We need to get the elves working NOW! The time is different in the North Pole (I figured out) so we still had a bit more time. Santa said, "You can help but I will bring you back tonight when we deliver all of the presents." He looked right into my eyes then smiled. We got working, I started helping the tiny but really kind elves. We worked until the end of time and When we were done he said in his jolly voice "We have to get going!". "We?", I said. "Yes we! How are you supposed to get home?". I smiled and got in. He said goodbye and waved in happiness. Once we left we waved through the sky and twisted through clouds. He went from roof top to roof top leaving me in a shock every time. When we got to my house, I waved to Santa in a heart full of joy. We said our goodbyes, I went into the house and climbed into bed. When I woke up the next morning, I was in shock. Santa left a beautiful ornament so I could remember this night forever.

## THE SLED OF FUN

By Chase Klassen, Grade 6, Carman

I wait in the cold winter day as my dad warms the snowmobile and get it ready to ride my dad used a rope to hook up the sled i get in, the bottom of the sled was bumpy and I could feel the snow under me and he started the engine, the engine roared as it turned on i was nervous and excited my dad who is driving the snowmobile headed for the field i who was practically shacking in the sled because of excitement and nervousness i slid back as my dad speeds up i realized we got to the field

we went as fast as a bunny with boosters the snow was flying around we went so fast the snow flakes hurt when they hit me we turned sharp and i slid to the side and it flipped i flu off and the snow punched me in the face as i face planted my dad saw and turned and i got back in the started to do donuts in the snow and i slid behind him the snow was beating me up and my dad finally turned and started to go straight the snow melted on my face and it cooled me down we turned and instead of flipping i just flu out and landed in the snow like a fox hunting i got back on i was on edge because that was unexpected we haded in I learned to never stop having fun.

## SANTA'S PRESENTS

By Brielle Findlay, Grade 6, Carman

When Santa was in the sky the toy bag had fallen out of the sleigh. Santa chased the toys as the sleigh bells rang but the reindeer and Santa got very tired, they headed back to the north pole depressed and tired. Santa said "I lost all the presents and now Christmas is ruined." They were all so sad and didn't believe that he said that. Mrs Claus said she would help but she couldn't see because of the fog. It was seeping through all the trees and the natural cold windy air. After a while they got super cold and headed back to the north pole with the blizzard. They were losing hope of ever finding the sack of presents. They went one last time and saw these kids. They had the sack of presents and couldn't believe that they found a sack of presents. Santa yelled at them and they ran because they didn't know who it was. After a while Santa found them and told them he needed the sack of presents. They said "You have to do something for it." He was in shock. But he did what they wanted and he grabbed the sack like his life depended on it.

After a couple hours he was in the second last country. It was Toronto, MB. He was going over the list and found that there were two more countries instead of one. He finished Toronto and went on to the Yukon. With some time left on the clock he went as fast as he could. He was trying to go a bit faster and almost finish and then a little boy named Carlos woke up and saw him. He got scared and didn't think so ...

He ran. He ran as fast as he could and you could feel the strong breeze of

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wind. He was so close but he was super tired and had a rest and then he sent his elves to grab a present and hug it like it was a baby. If they had squeezed it too tight it would break. They were very careful with it and dropped it under the tree. But they weren't quick enough and Santa got some help from Danny and Sarah. Danny flew the sleigh and Sarah read out the names. For Santa with that they went very quick it was unbelievable for them to do that so fast. After they finished all of the world. Santa took them home and they had saved Christmas for everyone. And Santa surprised them with a Christmas miracle by decorating their home with Christmas decorations and they had a happy Christmas. After Santa left their mom came home. They all shared a warm hug and ran in the cold all the way inside. When they went inside they sang Christmas carols and opened present after present. Sarah got a new bike and Danny got a skateboard.

After Santa went home, he had hot cocoa with Mrs. Claus. They all watched Christmas movie after Christmas movie. And had a nice Christmas supper. And then they had some sweets with candy canes and went to bed. They had a nice warm sleep. That was the end of the Christmas day. Every little boy and girl was asleep in bed warm and cozy. The next day was another cold foggy day.

## THE WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS LAND

By Addison Pethybridge, Gr.6, Carman

It was Winter and all the kids were outside playing with their parents... except Susie. Susie just sat outside rubbing the one present she got that year, a snow globe. She was crying outside of the orphanage crying because she has never felt that warm feeling of a hug. She wiped her tears as the footsteps got closer. A Nun came out and told her to come inside. As she walked to the beds she looked around to see nothing... No Christmas tree, No presents, and No decor just a cloud of dust and nothing. As she rubbed her globe she cried and said her Christmas wish "I wish I had a mother" Then something magical happened. She got sucked in to the snow globe and woke up in a warm cozy cottage and walked

outside to fall in her mother's arms but she pushed her away then Susie woke up in the hospital bed surrounded by Nuns. When she got back to the orphanage she sat outside and sighed... But something magical happened. Her mother held her in her arms and in the end she lived happily ever after.

## THE SNOWGLOBE

By Erika Nussey, Grade 6, Carman

One day a girl named Julie was dancing around in her kitchen listening to the music that plays from a snowglobe. Suddenly the music stopped, she went over to it and watched the white, glistening snowflakes fall down. She lifted it up to turn the notch at the bottom, so that the music would play again. When she walked away she shook it and stared at it right in the eyes. Something was in there almost like a person was in that snowglobe, but she brushed it off and kept on dancing. The music turned off "that was weird" she said I just turned it back on. Then suddenly she felt something off. Not something good, but something bad almost as if she was going to fall. Her mind was as blank as a sheet of white paper. She didn't know what to do. The ground started to shake then, everything got quiet. Mom, mom? Where are you! Then she realized "I'm not at home, where am I?" She looked around in fear. Then she saw that one red, woody, house that she saw when she was dancing, then she realized "I'm in the white, fuzzy, snowglobe!" "How am I going to get out of this?" She said, but she couldn't help but look at the beautiful snowy, magical winter wonderland ahead of her. She had to figure out a way to get out of here though, so she went to the red house ahead of her. Turns out that house was actually a workshop. When she got in she was greeted by over a dozen elves who looked like they were making presents for the kids across the world. They even asked her if she could help make presents, but her mind was focused on getting out of the snowglobe, so she politely declined, and asked the elves how to get out. They said that you had to find a lever and pull it down to break the magical curse. They had a map but they couldn't stop making presents otherwise they would be trapped there forever. So she went on a mission and followed the map. She was almost there but there is a problem "oh no" she said, there is a huge

mountain it would take her hours to climb up that mountain "there's no time to waste" said Julie, she went on because he couldn't disappoint the elves "ugh, this is taking FOREVER im not even to the top yet, I need to go faster" so she did. After 3 hours of walking up the snow covered, rocky, enormous mountain she FINALLY made it to the top. There was still a bit more walking to do on the map, she couldn't believe that there was so much to explore in one tiny, little snowglobe. When she got to the X she didn't see anything, but if there was a lever there should also be a wall. She stomped in anger, but she heard something, like something hollow. She decided to dig, dig so much that her finger would fall off because of the cold, wet snow. She felt there was a hole in the ground! Julie was ecstatic to find the way out, she could save the elves and everybody there. "Oh my gosh I actually found the lever! She pulled it, then she felt that dizzy feeling again. "Mom, Mom? Are you here?" "Sweetie, where were you?" "Mom, I was in a snowglobe. I bet you don't believe me but I was in a snowglobe and I got out. "Ok sweetie let's go have dinner".

## THE TRACKS ON THE TRAIL

By Caleb McCarty, Grade 6, Carman,

I woke up late and rushed like a squirrel trying to make up time, but it didn't matter I was so far behind that I missed the bus. So I ended up walking to school on the first day. As I was walking, I saw some curious looking tracks on a trail going into the woods. A trail that had not been there yesterday. It looked like a very small person had been jumping around in the snow, for some reason I couldn't keep walking. It was as if someone had used a lot of glue and put it on the soles of my feet, but eventually I was able to overcome the mysterious force and vowed that I would come back and see where they led.

During the day at school I couldn't concentrate on anything but where those tracks led, and what made them! As you may have wondered, as soon as they let us go, I rushed home as fast as I could but on a different path.

As I walked through the woods I couldn't help but notice how quiet it was. It looked beautiful but it sounded eerily still as if the world had stopped, but I could keep going. Eventually I got rid of that feeling. When I reached the trail, there was a small present on the ground.

"I wonder what it could be," I thought out loud. So I picked it up and started down the trail. As I went up the steep trail. I found more. They were clearly not for me! I still picked them up, hoping to find who they belonged to.

I have to admit that I was a little disappointed when I found where it led, just a big hole in the ground. I was

turning to go when I saw a bright red ribbon hanging on a root and dangling precariously was a present. It started to wobble, but not in time for me to grab it. Now I was leaning over the edge. I fanctively tried to get up and when I did the lege calapest sending me into the darkness.

When I came out I was not where I thought I was, at home but instead I was at the north pole.

"What", I stammered confused.

I looked around and there was nothing but a little cabin in the distance, but no way back. So I decided that instead of freezing in the snow I would go to the cabin and hope that they would let me in. When I got there I was confused there were many small homes around it. Suddenly a bunch of tiny humans jumped up and even though I couldn't understand them I could sense they were here to help.

I explained my predicament and they understood me and ran into the big home and started using a strange device.

Within minutes a large sleigh pulled up from out of the sky with Santa clauses in the seat "I see you need my help" he said in his jolly way "but I can not help you. I am missing all my presents for Christmas, it's tomorrow."

"What I know where they are" so we went and got them and he took me home.

"And that's how I saved Christmas," I said to my grandkids.

## THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

One snowy evening in December, Zack and his mom were decorating their Christmas tree together, when Zack exclaimed, "Mom, it's almost Christmas time!". After his excitement seemed to explode, Zack added, "You know Mom, I've been counting the days since Halloween!". Zack's Mom started to laugh and said it was time for bed. With all of the excitement around Christmas, Zack asked his Mom, "Is it Christmas Eve tomorrow?" Zack's Mom shook her head and told him to look at the enormous calendar on his wall above his bed. Zack realized that Christmas Eve was still two days away. "Have you even started Christmas shopping yet," Zack asked his mom.

His Mom responded saying, "Yes I have and I think you are going to love your presents!". Zack's Mom tucked him into bed and gave him a hug before going to bed.

As Zack was sleeping, he began to have a dream about him having his Dad back. The sun started to rise up into the frosty air and he went down the stairs to exclaim to his Mom and say "Mom, I just had the weirdest dream ever! It even ended on a cliff hanger, right as I got to see Dad again.

Continued on page 19



Continued from page 18

Hopefully I have the exact dream tonight. Do you think people can have the same dream twice?". That left Zack's mother wondering. "Umm, actually I'm not sure. I believe so", as Zack began gulping down his eggs and toast he went up the stairs to get dressed. His mom said, "You look very dashing today, make sure you have everything for this family gathering". Five hours later... "Finally we're home. I am so tired after that dinner." "Yes me too," said his Mom, "Now go and get ready for bed please." "Yes mom", he said. Zack heard his Mom's footsteps approaching, getting louder and louder, as his mom walked inside the room to give him a hug goodnight. Zack wondered if he'd have the same dream as last night. As her footsteps softened with each step. He fell asleep but he woke up three hours later and looked out the frosted window... He saw Santa at the exact moment he was about to blast off into the air like a rocket launching. Zack noticed his sack of presents fall out of the sleigh like a waterfall on a cliff. When he got to the next house, Santa also realized something! "THE PRESENTS ARE GONE!" he exclaimed "Where did my presents go!?!". He finally found them by a tree. He only had two hours left to hand out presents. That was not enough time he said to himself. Then Zack ran up and saw there were so many presents left in the sack. That's when Santa asked Zack to help hand them out, "Of course!!" exclaimed Zack. So they got to work, Zack got to tell Santa where the people live, what their names are and what country they live in. Once they were done doing all of their work Santa dropped Zack off at home. Zack fell right asleep. When Zack woke up to all of his presents underneath their delightful Christmas tree. As Zack was opening his presents he smelled the faint smell of cinnamon and notes of chocolate. Santa. It smells like Santa. Mom pointed her video



camera at him while he was opening his gifts he felt excitement because he had helped save Christmas!

## THE BEST CHRISTMAS

Mirna Mohamed, Grade 6, Carman

One Christmas day the reindeers were driving the sleigh so fast in the dark blue sky, accidentally the present fall, Santa was worried, he didn't get the present because he think it's broke when he went home, Santa's elves helped him, but there was lots of presents, there was a few hours and sunrise come, Santa was so busy making presents, he didn't look at the clock "Santa have an idea" the elves act like they are humans then they went to the town they saw people sad because it is the first day of Christmas and there was no presents, there Christmas tree was no present around it, the elves went to the market to get presents quickly, but all the market was close because it's Christmas, the elves tell Santa about every thing, Santa was sad the next day Santa finish all the presents and he was on his way to the town, when he arrived he surprised people was so happy, people found the presents that fall from the sleigh and there names on it, people think Santa made a new way to give people presents, all the town was celebrating about the new way Santa give people present, Santa like this way too because he always stuck in the chimney and he get black, when Santa throw present all the people look up, they saw Santa then Santa went to celebrate with them and eat cookies after that all the children get a ride on Santa's sleigh after the party, Santa don't know where to put the presents so he throw all the presents from the sleigh and there names on it, it was the best Christmas because Santa made a new way to give people presents and each person get two presents.

## SUGARLAND

By Isabella Orchard, Gr. 6, Carman

Julie woke up it was Christmas eve she was so excited she wanted to explode like a bomb she got out of bed still in her clothes from yesterday, yesterday she had been at the park until 9:00 the park was her favourite place because the snow always sparkled and glimmered in the sunlight anyways Julie got out of bed and shook her favourite snowglobe like she always does when she wakes up but this time when Julie shook her snowglobe the ground started to rumble and shake with it with Julie shut her eyes as tight as she could and when she opened them she found that she was in a dense forest with glistening snow all around her the snow looked like the snow at the park but much prettier which she didn't think would be possible Julie had just started thinking about when she shook the snowglobe she wished for the toy



# Christmas STORIES

she desperately wanted a wishglobe a wishglobe would grant any wish Julie could ever ask for. She marched down a long winding path at the end a the path stood a tall sturdy tower it was leaning ever so slightly like the eiffel tower she entered the tower still with her guard up she entered feeling wary she found three girls about her age the girls were chatting on and on about some magical plant called mallowsweet Julie walked in and asked if they had a way home they introduced themselves as Mia, Jane and Lila. Lila was the oldest and most mature she spoke up and said we can get you home if you help us find a mallowsweet she spoke softly and in a kind tone Julie happily agreed she just had one more question and that was what was this magical wonderland and Jane answered it was Sugarland wow Julie thought Sugarland is an amazing name so Julie set off in search of mallowsweet after a while she spotted a small bush that had fanned out purple leaves it just had to be mallowsweet so Julie plucked the whimsical plant from its stem and marched back to the tower where the three girls were waiting soon enough they were saying goodbye and there was a bright flash and in the blink of an eye Julie was back home where she belonged that's when Julie realized that the best present of all was true friends.

## CHRISTMAS STORY

By Michael Chima, Grade 6, Carman

It was the night before Christmas and all the elves were scrambling to finish up the last presents.

The rest of the presents were already in the magical sac that Mrs. Claus made for Mr. Claus.

The elves loaded the last presents into the sac then they zipped away to get the famous hot chocolate that Mrs. Claus makes for all the elves.

Mr. Claus dashed to the reindeers Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and Rudolph then he leashed them to the sled and got ready to leave.

Until he remembered the good list and the naughty list.

Then suddenly the new watcher elf was sprinting at Santa with all his might when he finally got to Santa he said here these more kids on the list this year cause more kids now know you the elf said in a breathless voice

but all that energy came right back when he smelt the smell of the hot chocolate and zipped away in a flash.

Santa looked through the list as quickly as a rabbit when he got to the last names he saw two names that stood out to him Mia and Jake he brushed it off and started riding.

He got to the first house in a flash but it was because of the magical power of the reindeers.

They zip through the night sky while all the kids and parents were asleep, until... He reached the braveheart street. The street was filled with flashing lights and decorations that would make frosty proud.

Santa was just riding in the street until he ran into an electric post and then he blacked out... When he woke up two kids were down at him with excited faces, then Santa remembered these kids from the list that is now torn up with holes in it but that didn't matter because when he looked for the sac of presents but he couldn't find it.

The two kids faces were filled with sadness and despair but then Santa got an idea, Rudolph was the only reindeer left that didn't get lost so Santa told the kids the plan then they got to work, Jake was 16 so he was old enough to drive so he went to look for the sac of presents, Mia the youngest had a bike so she quickly got it and her task was to find the rest of the reindeer so she got going, and Santa was going to stay at the same spot and fix the sled.

Jake finally found the sac he tried to lift it but it didn't budge he tried again this time but he believed that he could do it then a magical surge of power came into him then he picked it up with no problemo he put it on the back of the car then drove back to Santa.

Then Mia found the reindeers and started talking to them but it didn't work then she tried but with all her might this time it worked they were now following her now it was just to get them back.

When they both got back Santa was finished fixing the sled and now it was just to get the presents to all the kids.

It was time to say goodbye before he left.

He gave them their gifts for helping him.

He said goodbye and then he went of to gift of all the presents.



# sports&recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Female Hawks heading into new year with optimism

By Lorne Stelmach

It hasn't been a banner season so far for the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks, but coach Matt Victor remains optimistic.

He feels the team has made good progress and that there is good potential for them to make a real push in the new year when play resumes.

"I'm quite happy with the progress that we have seen from the start to now," Victor said. "I feel like the group has followed the process and believed in it, and we're making big strides in our game."

"Ultimately, we're striving for February and March where the real season starts, and I feel like we're on an upswing, and we're quite excited for it."

Before a pair of games just before the holiday break, the Hawks had been in seventh place at 6-8-0-1 for 13 points, but at that point they were just one point back of the Winnipeg Avros and

Central Plains and three behind Yellowhead.

Victor is encouraged especially by the fact the team has been very competitive and had close games with the top teams in the league.

"The level of parity we're seeing in the league, it's really anyone's chance," he said. "From third place to seventh, it's a matter of a few points here and there. The top two teams are kind of separating themselves, and that's something we really expected going into the season."

"Recently, we played the Winnipeg Ice and played a great game. It was a tight 2-1 game with them," he noted. "The nice thing I see with that, and going back to our group, is that we can play with these teams, and we can beat these teams ... if we play to our identity and our tactics and our systems ... we keep pushing that with them."

"We haven't gotten some out-

comes. We've kind of given some games away, but I think that happens with any team where you play well enough to win but you don't get the outcome," he said. "It's about the process. It's about the belief and really buying in, and I think our group is doing that now."

Looking ahead, he sees that they will have a tough stretch early in the new year with some tough teams, but he remains hopeful.

"Regardless of the outcome, I think it just keeps building us up. It helps, playing these top teams, in really nailing down the details that we need to be successful, and I think it's going to help us moving forward."

"There's always opportunity ... everybody makes the playoffs, so it's how far can you bring your group, bring in the trust and the belief that we can do it and potentially hitting our stride."

Victor highlighted positives that

have stood out as well as what the team needs to work on moving ahead.

"I feel like over our last seven or eight games, our team has really played to our identity," he said. "The identity we kind of brought forward with our group is the compete, the grit and just never quit."

"With that never quit attitude, they've proven it to themselves that they can do it," he said. "I think the big thing here for us is to find that consistency. It's there, but to continue with that consistency. So that's something I really want to push for the rest of the way."

"I feel like we really need to work on our game away from the puck. I think that's going to be a big thing that we need to work on," he concluded. "It's about being in the right places, making things hard when we don't have the puck so that we can create turnovers."

## Male U18 Hawks poised to push in second half of campaign

By Lorne Stelmach

It has been an up and down season so far for the male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks, but coach Jeff Andrews feels the team is well positioned to make a push in the second half in the new year.

Prior to three key games just before the holiday break, the Hawks had been in seventh place at 15-9-0-1 for 31 points, which had them five and six points behind Eastman and Southwest and just one point ahead of Parkland at press time last week.

"We're happy with where we are," said Andrews, who noted though having a little bit of a sour taste when the Hawks dropped a game against the Winnipeg Thrashers despite having had the lead before losing it in the third period.

"We also kind of got bit by the injury bug there and lost some important guys, and as a result, we just couldn't hold the lead down the stretch."

"Overall though, I'm happy with our performance so far," said Andrews, who suggested they have been competitive overall aside from three games against the Winnipeg Bruins where they "kind of laid an egg" and allowed 21 goals.

"At the end of the day, the overall results thus far have been pretty positive, I would say. We're right in a place we want to be to take a real hard run at it in the second half."

Andrews highlighted what he has liked so far and where he sees the team needing to make improvements.

"For me, the real bright spot is our

ability in playing five-on-five and playing hard and being a hard team to play against."

"Another bright spot would be our power play, which was sitting at first place in the league, so that's really important and something that we have prided ourselves in being good at," Andrews said. "To see those results I think is really encouraging."

"I think the biggest thing to work on would be our penalty kill. It's not where it needs to be, and we have tried a variety of different things and continue to work on that aspect of our game. It's something we need to be better at," he said. "We've just decided we're going to try to simplify and see if that yields results."

"I think another area we need to im-

prove is our discipline, like not taking penalties. If we are going to take penalties, they need to be from preventing scoring chances and things like that."

Andrews believes the team has the potential to move up in the standings and progress further.

"Everybody ahead of us in those next three spots are all in striking distance ... so we've kind of eyeballed getting in the top four as being a big goal for our hockey team."

"We've got lots of work to do ... although I am optimistic, I don't want to be too optimistic in the sense that we still have some work to do, and we still have some things we need to take care of."

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The Redboine Watershed District is currently seeking applicants for the position of

## Resource Technician Assistant (Summer 2026)

The Resource Technician Assistant will report directly to the Project Manager and will work under the general supervision of district staff. This position is located in Holland, MB, and the successful candidate must provide their own transportation to and from the office each day.

### \*\*Qualifications\*\*

- Preferably enrolled in post-secondary programs surrounding earth sciences. (ie. Land and water Management, GIS/Geomatics, Agriculture etc.)
- Experience with GPS and GIS would be looked upon greatly.
- Must hold a valid class 5 driver's license.
- Agriculture background is a definite asset.
- Able to work alone, or with a team safely.

### DUTIES:

- Assist in daily and summer projects such as dam building, well sealing, erosion protection etc.
- Work directly with landowners in the district.
- Assist in all GPS surveying and GIS analysis.
- Attend and assist with workshops, seminars, education days etc.
- Help with advertising the Watershed Districts.
- Daily housekeeping duties as needed.
- Follow safety guidelines.

Because the RBWD receives partial funding from the Urban/Hometown Green Team program and the Canada Summer Jobs program, priority will be given to applicants that are:

- Students or unemployed youth aged 16 to 24
- Living in rural Manitoba and legally entitled to work in Canada
- Finished their studies for the year if in high school
- Returning to an educational institution in the fall

If you are interested in applying for the position, please submit your resume before 4:00 pm, Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026 to:

Redboine Watershed District  
Box 220, 109 Broadway Street, Holland, MB  
R0G 0X0  
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**Classified booking deadline is Monday at 4 p.m. prior to Thursday's publication Please Call 204-467-5836**

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This position is at the Carman location and is open until filled. However, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

**Sudoku Answer**

6	4	2	9	5	3	1	7	8
5	1	8	7	4	6	9	2	3
7	3	6	1	2	8	9	5	4
2	8	1	4	6	7	5	3	9
3	6	9	5	8	2	7	4	1
4	7	5	9	3	1	2	8	6
8	5	3	2	1	6	4	9	7
6	2	7	8	9	4	3	1	5
1	9	4	3	7	5	8	6	2

**Crossword Answer**

K	C	E	N		D	E	L	E	D	S	E	O	I
S	I	B	I		T	V	R	V	C		O	N	E
I	R	V	B		T	V	R	V	C		G	E	H
H	E	B	A	S		T	O	C		V	E	N	S
					S	E	T	V	C	I	T	I	S
N	V	S			G	U	P		D	U	C		T
V	N	V	B	V	C		E	E	C		B	U	T
H	V	T	O	S		C	O	V	W		S	V	R
A	G	O	B		B	I	S		Q	E	T	I	N
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					S	E	D	V	N	E	R	E	S
T	V	B	V	C		H	O	T		R	E	D	D
V	N	V	N		T	E	N	V	W		W	V	R
D	O	O	T		S	F	V	R	W		V	V	N
O	B	W	U		S	O	C	O	C		N	V	T



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Public Utilities Board

Régie des services publics

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF THOMPSON  
REVISED WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES  
MIAMI URBAN WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITY

December 12, 2025

The Rural Municipality of Thompson (RM) has applied to the Public Utilities Board (Board) for revised water and wastewater rates for the Miami Urban Water and Wastewater Utility (Utility) as set out in By-Law No. 7-2025, read the first time on September 11, 2025. Rates were last approved in 2019 in Board Order No. 25/19, with current rates coming into effect January 1, 2021. Current rates also include pass through of Board approved Pembina Valley Water Co-op wholesale rate increases that came into effect from January 1, 2020 to April 1, 2025. The RM has also applied for the recovery of a 2023 Actual Operating Deficit, to be recovered using the Utility's Working Capital Surplus.

The current and proposed rates are as follows:

	Current Rates	Proposed Rates		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Quarterly Service Charge	\$7.35	\$9.20	\$10.13	\$11.05
Water (per cubic meter)	\$4.08	\$5.20	\$5.76	\$6.32
Wastewater (per cubic meter)	\$0.71	\$0.90	\$1.00	\$1.09
Minimum Quarterly Charge*	\$74.41	\$94.60	\$104.77	\$114.79
Bulk Water**	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Reconnection Fee***	\$35.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Hydrant Rental	\$75.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00

\*Based on 14 cubic meters  
\*\*per 1,000 gallons. For any quantity of 500 gallons or less, the minimum charge is \$8.00.  
\*\*\*Reconnection only occurs after all outstanding fees and penalties have been paid.

Details of the RM's application are available for review at the RM's office or the Board's office. Any questions concerning the application for revised rates, or the operation of the Utility, should be sent directly to the RM.

If you have concerns/comments regarding the RM's application for water and wastewater rates, please go to [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca) and provide your comment. Please note all comments will be forwarded to the RM.

Questions or comments should be sent on or before **January 26, 2026**.

The Board is the provincial regulatory agency that reviews and approves rates for water and wastewater utilities in Manitoba, with the exception of the City of Winnipeg.

The Board's review process involves:

- the Utility filing a rate application to the Board,
- a public notification of proposed rate changes,
- the Board's review of the application through a public hearing or paper review process, and
- the issuance of an Order which outlines the Board's decision on the rate application and the rates to be charged.

The Manitoba Ombudsman has privacy guidelines for administrative tribunals. The Board is mindful of its obligations under those guidelines. Its decisions in respect of the application being considered will be sensitive to the guidelines. Personal information will not be disclosed unless it is appropriate and necessary to do so. However, the Board advises participants that these proceedings are public and that as a result, personal information protections are reduced.

The Board will then decide whether any further notice is required and whether to proceed with a public hearing or paper review process. All concerns received by the Board will be considered in the Board's decision on rates to be charged.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT IN CONSIDERING THIS APPLICATION, THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD MAY OR MAY NOT FIND IT NECESSARY TO DETERMINE RATES DIFFERENT FROM THOSE APPLIED FOR BY THE APPLICANT.

Note: All proceedings will be conducted in accordance with the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure, which the Board may vary in order to constrain regulatory costs. The Rules are available at [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca).

*Frederick Mykytyshyn*

Frederick Mykytyshyn Assistant Associate Secretary  
Manitoba Public Utilities Board

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Public Utilities Board

Régie des services publics

NOTICE OF APPLICATION  
RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF THOMPSON  
REVISED WATER RATES  
THOMPSON RURAL WATER UTILITY

December 12, 2025

The Rural Municipality of Thompson (RM) has applied to the Public Utilities Board (Board) for revised water rates for the Thompson Rural Water Utility (Utility) as set out in By-Law No. 8-2025, read the first time on September 11, 2025. Rates were last approved in 2023 in Board Order No. 46/23, with current rates coming into effect July 1, 2025. Current rates also include pass through of Board approved Pembina Valley Water Co-op wholesale rate increases that came into effect April 1, 2024 and April 1, 2025.

The current and proposed rates are as follows:

	Current Rates	Proposed Rates		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Quarterly Service Charge	\$12.44	\$12.37	\$12.18	\$11.98
Water (per 1,000 gallons)	\$23.80	\$30.53	\$33.49	\$36.45
Minimum Quarterly Charge*	\$83.84	\$103.96	\$112.65	\$121.33
Reconnection Fee**	\$35.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

\*Based on 3,000 gallons  
\*\*Reconnection only occurs after all outstanding fees and penalties have been paid.

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*Frederick Mykytyshyn*

Frederick Mykytyshyn Assistant Associate Secretary  
Manitoba Public Utilities Board



# Announcements

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## OBITUARY



**James Douglas "Jim" Curdt**

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of James Douglas Curdt (Jim) on December 12, 2025 at Rest Haven Personal Care Home in Steinbach, Manitoba, after a lengthy illness.

Jim was predeceased by his parents, Percy and Alice Curdt, and by his brother William Glenn Curdt.

He is survived by his sisters Eileen Winters and Pat Lecuyer, as well as their children and grandchildren, who will forever cherish his kindness, humour, and steady presence.

Born and raised in Manitoba, Jim spent most of his life on the family homestead near Sperling, where he and his brother Glenn farmed side by side. In the later years of his working life, Jim proudly spent 17 years doing pick ups and deliveries for Sperling Industries.

Jim and Glenn were known across the community for quietly stepping up whenever help was needed—erecting steel bins, helping with harvest, or a neighbour just short on hands—no request was ever too small. Jim was also an avid outdoorsman, happiest in the crisp air, with a deep appreciation for hunting, particularly with his musket or bow.

In recent years, we were fortunate to enjoy many wonderful visits with Jim, recounting stories of our family and the Sperling community. Those conversations - filled with memory, laughter, and gratitude - remain a blessing to us all.

Jim will be sorely missed by his family, friends, and the many neighbours whose lives were touched by his generosity.

We would like to acknowledge the staff at Rest Haven for the support and attention they gave Jim, he and all of us fully appreciated the great care he received there.

Service details and memorial information will be shared when available.

Doyle's Funeral Home  
in care of arrangements  
[www.doylesfuneralhome.ca](http://www.doylesfuneralhome.ca)

## OBITUARY



**Ken Kee**

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Col (Ret'd) M.K. Kee (Ken), who died peacefully in Warkworth, Ontario, on November 27, 2025, at the age of 88.

Born in Graysville, Manitoba, Ken dedicated his life to service, leadership, and community. He served with distinction for more than three decades in the Royal Canadian Air Force, where his professionalism, integrity, and steady guidance earned the respect of all who served with him. Ken retired from the RCAF to Quinte West, Ontario, to become the first Executive Director of the National Air Force Museum of Canada, helping to lay the foundation for an institution that remains a proud tribute to Canada's military aviation heritage.

Ken was predeceased by his beloved wife, Barbara (née Waddell of Sperling), with whom he shared a lifetime rich in partnership, humour, and devotion. He is survived by his son, Jason, and by his many nieces and nephews — Lori, Maggie, Jim K., Jim H., Brian, Doug, Jacquie, and JoAnne. He will also be fondly remembered by extended family, friends, and former colleagues who were touched by his wisdom, warmth, and quiet generosity.

Those who knew Ken will remember him as a thoughtful, principled man with a gentle wit and a lifelong commitment to those around him. He was a mentor to many and a steady presence whose influence will be felt for years to come.

In keeping with Ken's wishes, no funeral will be held.

If desired, donations in his memory may be made to the National Air Force Museum of Canada, an institution he was exceptionally proud to serve.

Memories, stories, and condolences may be shared at [www.weaverfuneralhomes](http://www.weaverfuneralhomes)

## OBITUARY



**Nola June Sylvester (née Smith)**

Nola June Sylvester (née Smith) passed away peacefully on December 15, 2025 at Boyne Lodge in Carman, Manitoba, at the age of 78, after a courageous journey with Alzheimer's disease.

Born September 2, 1947 in Carman, Manitoba, Nola married Darryl Sylvester on November 4, 1967. Together they operated Syl's Drive-Inn in Roblin and later in Carman, where they returned in 1982.

Doyle's Funeral Home  
in care of arrangements  
[www.doylesfuneralhome.ca](http://www.doylesfuneralhome.ca)

take a break > GAMES

## SUDOKU

2			5					
	1	3				7		
7		4						
	8			3	6			
						9		
6			7		4			2
4	5			2				
			6		7		1	5
								6

Level: intermediate

### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

### CLUES ACROSS

- Light cavalry
- Coconut palms
- Rounded knob
- Central Japan city
- Sandwiches
- Shape produced by a curve
- Ancient region in modern-day Syria
- French modernist painter
- Grandmother
- Mammary gland of cattle
- Rocky peak
- Secret plan
- Songs to one's lover
- More (Spanish)
- Father
- Chinese principle underlying the universe
- Ballplayer's accessory
- Together
- A person's brother or sister
- Evil spirit
- Monetary units
- Partner to cheese
- About Sun
- Group of like-minded people
- After B
- Seaside room
- Recipe measurement
- Partly digested food
- Flat-faced dog
- People of southern Africa
- Salts
- Beard lichens
- Sanders is one
- Fencing sword
- Ethnic group of Albania
- Metric weight unit

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20					21		22				23			
			24		25				26					
27	28	29		30				31				32	33	34
35			36				37				38			
39						40				41				
42					43				44					
45				46				47				48		
			49				50				51			
52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60						61				62		63		
64						65						66		
67						68						69		

- Italian seaport
- Longtime late night host
- Extremely angry
- Miami mascot
- Mid-month day
- Marked for omission
- Body part

### CLUES DOWN

- Two-toed sloth
- Fat from a pig's abdomen
- Romanian city
- Specifies
- Rounded, glaciated valley
- Spoke
- Collection of sacred books
- Extravagantly theatrical
- Very fast airplane
- Forearm bones
- Ancient kingdom
- Legitimate: \_\_\_ fide
- Semitransparent gemstone
- Counsels
- Head honcho
- Cool!
- Touch lightly
- Extract money via taxation
- Dyes
- Cloying sweetness

- Sodas
- Coastal village in Guam
- Chemical ring
- The bill in a restaurant
- Car mechanics group
- One-time presidential candidate Dole
- Health care for the aged
- Wise persons
- Passage with access at one end
- Make a wound
- America's spies
- Roof of the mouth
- Plants of the lily family
- Pinkish-red color
- Vaccine developer
- Mottled citrus fruit
- A place to store garden tools
- Rare goose native to Hawaii
- Popular Hollywood pig
- Musician Clapton
- A move exposing one to danger
- Historic Spanish soldier
- CNN's founder

Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts



# get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



## Turkey Bacon and Spinach Quiche with Sweet Potato Crust

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 5  
Nonstick cooking spray  
1 medium sweet potato, peeled  
1 teaspoon canola or corn oil  
1 medium yellow onion, diced  
6 slices uncured, nitrate-free turkey bacon, thinly sliced  
10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed  
3/4 teaspoon dried dillweed, crumbled  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
4 large egg whites  
2 large eggs  
1/4 cup fat-free milk  
1 1/2 tablespoons fat-free feta cheese  
Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly spray 9-inch pie pan with nonstick cooking spray.  
In medium bowl, using box grater, grate sweet potato. Measure out 2

cups. Gently press sweet potato on bottom and up sides of pan, forming crust. Sweet potato will be loose but will hold together once cooked.

Bake 20 minutes, or until crust is cooked. Remove from oven. Let stand to cool. Reduce oven temperature to 350 F.

In medium skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat bottom. Cook onion 6 minutes, or until almost translucent, stirring frequently. Add turkey bacon. Cook 3-4 minutes, or until onion and bacon begin to brown, stirring frequently. Add spinach, dillweed, salt and pepper. Cook 1-2 minutes, or until water from spinach is released. Remove from heat. Transfer mixture into sweet potato crust.

In medium bowl, whisk egg whites, eggs and milk. Pour over mixture in crust. Sprinkle feta over top.

Bake 35-40 minutes, or until knife inserted into center comes out clean. Transfer to cooling rack. Let cool 10 minutes before cutting into wedges.



## Broccoli and Cheese Egg White Scramble on Whole-Wheat English Muffins

clean.

In large bowl, whisk egg whites, milk and pepper until combined.

Lightly spray skillet with cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Pour in egg white mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes, or until almost firm, stirring constantly with spatula. Stir in broccoli and cheddar cheese. Remove from heat.

Just before serving, split and toast English muffins. Transfer to plates. Spoon egg mixture onto muffins.

## Egg "Muffin" Cups with Turkey Sausage and Mushrooms

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 6  
Nonstick cooking spray  
1/2 tablespoon canola or corn oil  
1 yellow onion, finely chopped  
1 package (8 ounces) sliced white

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 4  
Nonstick cooking spray  
1 1/2 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen broccoli florets, thawed if frozen  
1/4 cup water  
8 extra-large egg whites  
1/2 cup fat-free milk  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
1/4 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese  
2 whole-wheat, low-sodium English muffins  
Lightly spray large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Cook broccoli and water 4-5 minutes, or until broccoli is tender. Remove from heat. Transfer broccoli to dish. Using paper towels, wipe skillet

## Ask the Money Lady

Dear Money Lady, I know it's not tax season, but have you got any tips on how to reduce the amount of taxes I pay every year?

Carol

Dear Carol,  
Unfortunately, the more money you make the more tax you pay, thanks to the marginal tax rate system in Canada. Many people make financial decisions based on their gross income; however, from a planning perspective, it's not good enough to know how much money you make, but rather to know how much money you keep. Making a dollar today doesn't mean you can count on spending that dollar tomorrow.

We all have two layers of taxation in Canada: federal and provincial. The one thing that is guaranteed with taxation, is that it is progressive. So, over time it continues to go up. Just to give you an example: when RRSPs first came out in 1957, the highest marginal tax rate in Ontario was 11.5 per cent, now it is 53.5 per cent. Knowing your marginal tax rate is one part of understanding your net income; however, there are specific strategies that you can utilize to help minimize the taxes you pay. The three best ways are to Deduct, Defer and Divide. Let's talk about each method.

1. Deduct: This would be a deduction or claim to reduce your taxable income. The best way to do this is to have a home-based business, be an independent contractor, or be a self-employed entrepreneur to write off expenses against your gross taxable income. Look for ways to lower your income through various expenses or income-splitting.

2. Defer: Deferring tax means you move the obligation to pay current taxes into your future years. The advantages to deferring taxation works on the premise that it is better to pay the taxation in the future; perhaps when your income is much lower, than to pay it today, when your income is in a higher marginal tax



bracket. This can be done through registered pension plans (RPP + PRPP), registered retirement savings plans (RRSP + RRIF), registered education savings plans (RESP), and registered disability savings plans (RDSP).

3. Divide: Income splitting is the best way to divide your income and lower taxation. Now I know that many of you who are single will say that this is not relevant – and you're right. Dividing income can only be done with your partner (so you will need to have one to do this last taxation step). Here are some of the ways you can split income.

- \* Spousal RRSPs
- \* Sharing CPP benefits
- \* Paying wages to family members through a business
- \* Using trusts
- \* Using partnerships or corporations to earn business income

Tax planning is easier than you think. Try to utilize a TFSA (tax free savings account) as much as possible. If you were 18 or older as of January 1, 2009 when TFSAs first started you can contribute up to \$102,000 in the cumulated contribution room since inception.

Good Luck and Best Wishes,  
Money Lady

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author, Finance Writer and Syndicated Money Coach on BNN Bloomberg. Christine is also part of the everyday lineup on CTV Your Morning in every province. No AI. Follow Christine on Instagram @askthemoneylady, or on Facebook (Christine Ibbotson).

mushrooms

1 package (6.4 ounces) frozen, cooked, nitrate-free turkey sausage links, thawed

7 large eggs

1/4 cup fat-free milk

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In medium nonstick pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook onions

and mushrooms 10 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally.

Warm turkey sausage according to package directions. Chop turkey into bite-size pieces. Stir into onion mixture until well blended. Spoon into muffin cups.

In small bowl, whisk eggs, milk and pepper. Pour egg mixture into muffin cups. Top with cheddar cheese.

Bake 25 minutes, or until eggs are set. Remove from oven. Let cool slightly. To easily remove muffins from pan, run knife around edges of each muffin.